Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-102
Friday
24 May 1996

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-102 *24 May 1996*

CONTENTS

NOTICE: An * indicates material that may not be disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inter-Arab Affairs

International Affairs: Butrus-Ghali Interview on Qana, UN Sanctions *[MENA]* 1

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Says Iran, 'Other Parties Ordered' Police Murders *[Jericho VOP]* 3
Palestinian Affairs: Al-Zahhar Denies Meeting With Shaykh Yasin *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 3
Palestinian Affairs: Al-Zahhar's Call For Halt to Anti-Israel Operations Lauded *[Jericho VOP]* 4
Palestinian Affairs: Abu-Rudaynah Reacts to Israeli Paper's Report on Jerusalem *[MENA]* 4
Palestinian Affairs: Gaza Security Chief Says Forces 'Ready To Deploy' in Hebron *[Jericho VOP]* 4

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: Israeli, PA Dispute Over Rafah Airport Settled *[Jerusalem Radio]* 4

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Algeria: GIA Claims To Have Killed Kidnapped French Monks *[Paris TV]* 5
Algeria: France Repeats Call for All Nationals To Leave *[Paris International]* 5
Algeria: Parliamentary Talks Held With Pakistani Senate Delegation *[Algiers TV]* 5
Algeria: Zeroual Briefs Ministers on National Developments *[Algiers TV]* 5
Algeria: Parties React to Memorandum on Political Future *[Algiers Radio]* 6
Algeria: Former Prime Minister Reacts to President's Memorandum *[Algiers Radio]* 6
Algeria: Profile of Fida, Armed Wing of Djaz'arist Tendency *[EL WATAN 9 May]* 7
Algeria: Article on Political Parties Disputing Zeroual's Approach *[EL WATAN 9 May]* 8
Algeria: Prime Minister Announces Free Trade Zone in Jijel Province *[Algiers Radio]* 8
Algeria: Medea Court Passes 11 Death Sentences in Absentia *[Algiers Radio]* 9

Egypt

Egypt: Al-Qadhdhafi To Arrive in Cairo 25 May *[MENA]* 9
Egypt: Libyan Communications, Transport Official Arrives *[MENA]* 9
Egypt: Armed Forces Receive 600 Armored Vehicles From Netherlands *[MENA]* 9
Egypt: Commentator Views Israeli Elections, Peace Process *[Cairo Radio]* 9

Sudan

Sudan: Al-Bashir Discusses CAR Situation With President Patasse *[Omdurman Radio]* 10
Sudan: Al-Bashir Comments on UN Resolution Against Country *[Omdurman Radio]* 11
Sudan: Al-Turabi on Egypt, Sanctions, Arab Unity *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 18 May]* 11

IRAQ

Iraq: U.S., UK Blamed for People's Suffering Under Sanctions *[INA]* 13

Iraq: U-2 Overflights Protested to UN *[INA]* 13
Iraq: UN Envoy Hamdun on Oil-for-Food Talks *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 23 May]* 13
Iraq: Trade Minister on Food Distribution to Citizens *[INA]* 17
Iraq: Paper Urges Exploitation of Improved Relations With UN *[London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI 22 May]* 17

ISRAEL

Israel: Shaykh Yasin Appeal to Hamas Seen as Part of Release Deal *[Jerusalem TV]* 19
Israel: Iranian Efforts To Topple Peres Government Described *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 23 May]* 19
Israel: Peres on Jerusalem, Run-Up to Elections *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 23 May]* 19
Israel: Netanyahu on Likud Stands, Run-Up to Elections *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 23 May]* 23

LEBANON

Lebanon: Al-Hirawi States Views on Monitoring Group, Elections *[VOL]* 27
Lebanon: Resistance Claims Responsibility for Explosive Charge *[Beirut Radio]* 27
Lebanon: Israeli Bomb Explodes, Kills Citizen *[Beirut Radio]* 27
Lebanon: Suspected Bomber Extradited to Germany *[VOL]* 27

SYRIA

Syria: Memo Rejecting Terrorism to UN Session in Geneva Reported *[Damascus Radio]* 28
Syria: U.S. Middle East Policy, Relations With Arabs Viewed *[Damascus Radio]* 28
Syria: Radio Urges U.S. To Restore 'Credibility' to Its Peace Role *[Damascus Radio]* 28
Syria: Paper Criticizes Peres Statements on Peace 'Maneuver' *[Damascus Radio]* 29

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Hezb-e Eslami Faction Stays in High Coordination Council *[Message of Freedom]* 31
Afghanistan: Opposition Group Expels 37 Members From Central Council *[Message of Freedom]* 31
Afghanistan: Hezb-e Eslami Denies Losing District in Lowgar Province *[Message of Freedom]* 31
Afghanistan: Kabul Military Sources Claim 70 Taleban Killed in Fighting *[IRNA]* 31
Afghanistan: Commentary Asks Germany Not To Disrupt Relations *[Message of Freedom]* ... 32

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Tanks Leaving Presidential Palace for Barracks *[AFP]* 33
Bangladesh: Wajed Questions Army's Neutrality's During Elections *[AFP]* 33
Bangladesh: Awami League Chief Criticizes BNP Over President's Power *[Dhaka Radio]* 34

India

India: President Sharma Addresses Parliament *[Delhi TV]* 34
India: BJP, Congress Clash Over Sharma Reference to Cow Protection *[Delhi Radio]* 38
India: Vajpayee To Move Confidence Vote Motion on 27 May *[Delhi Radio]* 39
India: Congress Asks MPs To Vote Against BJP Confidence Motion *[Delhi Radio]* 39
India: BJP Calls For 'Rethinking' by MP's Over Confidence Vote *[Delhi Radio]* 39
India: Further on Kashmir Elections; Vajpayee Congratulates People *[Delhi Radio]* 39
India: Western Media Allegations About Kashmir Elections Rejected *[Delhi Radio]* 40
India: Alert Sounded in Various States After Bomb Blasts *[Delhi Radio]* 40
India: Pakistan Accused of Recent Bomb Blasts *[Delhi International]* 41
India: Report Views Progress of MiG-21 Upgrade Plan *[THE TIMES OF INDIA 23 May]* 41

India: Delhi To Acquire French Technology for MiG-21's *[THE HINDU 23 May]* 42
India: Normality Returning to Violence-Hit Areas of Assam *[Delhi Radio]* 43
India: Competition With Japan for Security Council Membership *[INDIAN EXPRESS 21 May]* 43

Iran

Iran: Military Units in 'Velayat' Maneuvers Detailed *[Tehran TV]* 45
Iran: Over 200,000 Personnel Participate in Velayat Maneuvers *[IRNA]* 45
Iran: Khamene'i Addresses Troops on 'Velayat' Maneuvers *[Tehran TV]* 46
Iran: Ground Forces General Praises Velayat War Maneuvers *[IRNA]* 46
Iran: Second Stage of 'Velayat' Maneuvers Begins *[IRNA 24 May]* 46
Iran: 'Velayat' Maneuvers End, Seen as 'Complete Success' *[IRNA]* 47
Iran: IRGC Conducts First Stage of Amphibious Maneuver in Abadan *[IRNA]* 47
Iran: Turkish Envoy Summoned to Foreign Ministry Over Road Death *[IRNA]* 47
Iran: Police Disperse Protesters Outside Turkish Embassy *[AFP]* 47
Iran: UN Representative—Tehran Committed to Social Summit Goals *[IRNA]* 48
Iran: Rafsanjani—'We Welcome Foreign Investment' *[TEHRAN TIMES 20 May]* 49
Iran: Tehran Criticizes Turkish Press Reports Against Iran *[Tehran International]* 50
Iran: Paper Condemns Attack on Turkish President Demirel *[IRAN NEWS 20 May]* 51
Iran: Paper on Assassination Attempt on Turkey's Demirel *[TEHRAN TIMES 20 May]* 51
Iran: Christopher Accusation on Terrorism Rejected *[Tehran International]* 52
Iran: U.S Conference Notes 'Spectacular' Opportunities in Iran *[KHORASAN 12 May]* 52
Iran: Commentary Views Background to Kohl's U.S. Visit *[Tehran International]* 53
Iran: SAIRI Leader—UN Sanctions on Iraq 'Unfair' *[TEHRAN TIMES 19 May]* 54
Iran: Iraq-UN Deal To Implement Resolution 986 Discussed *[TEHRAN TIMES 22 May]* 55
Iran Defends Role in Bosnia-Herzegovina *[London THE EUROPEAN 29 May]* 55
Iran: Tehran Views Turkish-Greek Tensions in Aegean Sea *[Tehran International]* 56
Iran: Ukraine Deputy Prime Minister Calls For Expanded Trade *[IRNA]* 56
Iran: Rafsanjani Holds Talks With Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister *[IRNA]* 57
Iran: Nateq-Nuri, Sudanese Energy Minister Discuss Bilateral Ties *[Tehran TV]* 57
Iran: Iranian-Sudanese Letter of Understanding Signed *[IRNA]* 57
Iran: Trade With China To Double by Mar 1997 *[IRNA]* 57
Iran: Larijani Meets Japanese Deputy Foreign Minster *[IRNA]* 58
Iran: Culture Minister Calls For Cooperation With Uzbekistan *[IRNA]* 58
Iran: Majles Amends Penal Code at Guardian Council Request *[Tehran Radio]* 59
Iran: Khamene'i Speaks on Anniversary of Khomeyni's Death *[Tehran TV]* 59
Iran: Majles Speaker Delivers Address at Khomeyni's Mausoleum *[IRNA]* 59
Iran: 'Upholders of Hezbollah' Group Formed in Mashhad *[IRAN 20 May]* 60
Iran: Students in Karaj March in Support of Islamic Values *[Tehran TV]* 60
Iran: SALAM Readers on Tehran Movie Theater Attacks *[19 May]* 60
Iran: Majles Speaker, Ministers Attend War Victims' Funeral *[Tehran TV]* 60
Iran: Report Views Reasons Behind Cancelled University Lecture *[AKHBAR 19 May]* 61
Iran: Ayatollah Discusses Role of Universities *[RESALAT 19 May]* 61
Iran: Ansar-e Hezbollah Statement Cited *[RESALAT 12 May]* 62
Iran: Rafiqdust Sees 'Mysterious Hands' Behind Allegations *[RESALAT 18 May]* 63
Iran: Khamene'i Says Universities 'Not Islamic' *[Tehran Radio]* 65
Iran: Paper Defends Meeting With Ansar-e Hezbollah Members *[AKHBAR 19 May]* 65
Iran: AKHBAR To Appear in Reduced Form Owing to 'Paper Shortage' *[SALAM 20 May]* .. 65
Iran: Daily Explains Reduced Length Due to Paper Shortage *[AKHBAR 19 May]* 66
Iran: Officials Refuse To Hand Over AKHBAR's Newsprint Allocation *[AKHBAR 20 May]* .. 66
Iran: Need for Journalists' Union Described *[RESALAT 11 May]* 66
Iran: Paper Views Measures To Eradicate Poverty, Tax Issue *[TEHRAN TIMES 19 May]* 67

Iran: Prayer Headquarters Officials Meet With IRNA's Verdinezhad *[IRAN 20 May]* 68

Pakistan

Pakistan: Islamabad Reports Situation in Kashmir on Polling Day *[Islamabad TV]* 68
Pakistan: Black Day Observed, Resolution Passed Against Kashmir Polls *[Islamabad Radio]* 69
Pakistan: Sikandar Elected AJK President; Plea To Halt Polls Rejected *[THE NEWS 23 May]* 69
Pakistan: Leghari Solicits PRC Support on Kashmir *[Islamabad Radio]* 70
Pakistan: Leghari Reluctant To Sign Presidential Reference *[THE NATION 23 May]* 70
Pakistan: Official Refutes U.S. Allegations on Iranian Terrorism *[IRNA]* 71
Pakistan: Foreign Secretary Comments on Talks With Russian Officials *[Islamabad TV]* 71
Pakistan: U.S. 'Moral High Ground' on Nuclear Matters Questioned *[THE FRONTIER POST 20 May]* 71
Pakistan: IMF Links $1.5 Million Loan to 'Conditions' *[THE FRONTIER POST 22 May]* 72

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: LTTE Militants Suffer 'Heavy Casualties' in Naval Attack *[Colombo International]* 73
Sri Lanka: Commander—No Human Rights Complaints Against Army *[DAILY NEWS 23 May]* 74
Sri Lanka: LTTE Dispatch Reports Troop Atrocities, LTTE Offensive *[Tamil Eelam News WWW]* 74
Sri Lanka: LTTE Dispatch Reports Civilian Deaths in Air Force Raids *[Tamil Eelam News WWW]* 75

Inter-Arab Affairs

International Affairs: Butrus-Ghali Interview on Qana, UN Sanctions

NC2305160996 Cairo MENA in English 1330 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, May 23 (MENA)—UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali said he has not yet taken a decision to run for a second term as a chief of the world body. In an interview published in today's AL-AHRAM WEEKLY, a Cairo English-language weekly newspaper, Butrus-Ghali said sanctions are not only imposed on Arab countries. "In fact we Arabs continue to suffer from a persecution complex," said the secretary general, explaining that sanctions were imposed on Serbia, Haiti and Cuba .

Following is the text of the interview conducted by AL-AHRAM WEEKLY with UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali, appearing in today's issue:

[Question] Were you aware of the size of the risk you were taking when you released the report on the Qana massacre committed by Israel against Lebanese civilians?

[Butrus-Ghali] What are they going to do? Are they going to hang me in a square in front of the United Nations? Come on. I once met the president of Uganda, and with me was Egypt's ambassador to Uganda who was always complaining. I said to the president within earshot of the ambassador, "Mr president, if what I have said is not carried out, we will hang the ambassador." The Ugandan president said, "I have got no objection, only I do not want him hanged inside Uganda."

[Question] Don't you think that the report will affect your chances to be reelected for a second term as UN secretary general?

[Butrus-Ghali] My reply is that I have not yet taken a decision to run again or not. This is for several reasons. One is that any move I make would be interpreted as campaigning. I, therefore, have an interest in delaying the decision because I am hesitant since the United Nations is in a serious financial crisis. Member states owe U.S. $2,300 million. Do you want me to work as an undertaker at the end of my life and lock up the UN's gates? We are forced to make a thousand UN employees redundant this year. And, in addition to the financial crisis, there is a crisis in the budget. The UN budget was reduced by U.S. $154 million, making it imperative to do away with 1 thousand jobs. It's lousy work. At one time they wanted to send me packing and say good riddance to me.

[Question] You have mentioned in interviews that you are formulating new ideas for the post-Cold War era. Why then don't you consider staying on at the UN and finishing something that you've started?

[Butrus-Ghali] When I nominated myself for the post of UN secretary general, I was 69, which gave me hope that I could help fashion the features of a new post-Cold War era. Today I say that this needs another 10 years at least. It's a difficult and long process. I will give you an analogy. After the end of World War II in 1945, no one foresaw the Cold War. On the contrary, the features of the Russian-American-British alliance were still in place. Together they set up an organisation—the UN, but in March 1949 NATO was founded and in 1955 the Warsaw Pact was signed. Then West Germany joined NATO. So the transformation happened. In the 10 years between 1945 and 1955, the world became polarised and the organisations which managed the Cold War were established. Today we are living in a similar period of transition. New difficulties have arisen that did not exist before, such as today's technological revolution and the numerous types of globalisation: The globalisation of the economy, the media, the environment (as we saw after the Chernobyl disaster) and the globalisation of diseases and epidemics. A case in point: It took syphilis 23 years to be carried from Latin America, where it began, to China. Today AIDS is transmitted in a matter of hours. Look at drugs and how they've spread; it has become an international problem. Terrorism has become an international problem as well, and was discussed by world leaders in the Sharm al-Shaykh Peacemakers Conference. There are also new players on the world scene with influence on international policy, such as nongovernmental organisations, multinational organisations and grassroots groups. It's as if the power of the state is diminishing and new leaderships are appearing.

We are in a situation similar to someone driving an old car at a speed of 40 kilometres per hour who has to repair the car as he is driving and catch up with a top-of-the-line car which is going at 120 km an hour. Is it possible to catch up?

Some people believe that the technological revolution has helped us to face the new world order. In my opinion this is a fallacy. Each day brings new problems which we cannot resolve. For instance, eight years ago, when I was an official in Egypt, I said that terrorism was a worldwide problem and warned people of its consequences. And I repeated in France that terrorism was international. Who would have imagined then that some day somebody could simply make a phone call to announce the time and place of an upcoming bomb explosion. And this person might be calling from, let us say, Islamabad or some other place thousands of kilometres away. Terrorists have access to a lot of

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

money and they have international cheque books. This has given terrorism, as well as drug trafficking, an international dimension that has changed their scope. I want to see results and I want to contribute. In short, the matter needs time.

[Question] I would like to clarify a point in your position on the UN sanctions against Iraq. You have previously pointed out that sanctions should be aimed at the government rather than the people, but how can this be achieved?

[Butrus-Ghali] We haven't really found a way out. The problem is still being researched. However in Haiti, for example, the international community found a way to address the problem. The foreign assets belonging to the military dictatorship that was refusing to allow the peaceful transition to a civilian government were frozen. And this proved to be effective. Moreover, the Haitian people were not affected by such measures. Another successful form of sanctions was to hit the military dictatorship with numerous travel bans. What I am saying is that it is imperative to devise means to sanction governments without punishing the people. This is far from being easy and requires creativity. And we should not forget that governments are by definition static and resistant to innovation and change. The UN is no different. Change is a slow and painful process. Therefore, sanctions continue to be applied in the same old way. Nevertheless, change is inevitable and the Security Council has discussed the urgent need to seek new approaches. For my part, I tried unsuccessfully to promote my version of what I call "preventive diplomacy" which is comparable to a car insurance policy. Unfortunately, the world community is reluctant to implement anything like that. In this context, I often quoted a Chinese proverb which translates as: "It is always difficult to find money for medicine, but it is easy to find money for a coffin." This kind of behaviour defines the attitude of the world community.

I got tired of telling them that there was real potential for disaster in Burundi, comparable to the Rwandan genocide. I told them that we needed to draw up a "convention plan," that is a plan of action that would facilitate the quick deployment and intervention of our forces within two days, not two months, when and if needed. Had this been put in place, we would only be faced with maybe 100,000 refugees instead of two million and instead of half a million people dying there might be only 50,000 victims. New ideas need time, not only within individual countries but also within the UN institutions. [Question] Is there a link between the sanctions imposed on Iraq, Libya and Sudan?

[Butrus-Ghali] Speaking in a totally unbiased manner, I can say that sanctions were also imposed on Haiti and Serbia, as well as Cuba. It is true that sanctions are now exclusively imposed on Arab countries. However, if we think back historically, we have to remember that Italy and Germany were also sanctioned by having to pay reparations (to the allies) after World War II. This means that sanctions are not only imposed on Arab countries. In fact, we Arabs continue to suffer from a persecution complex. We tend to perceive the world in terms of plots and conspiracies. This is understandable because of our common history of colonisation. Other southern countries have the same problem. In Egypt, it is common to find people who will cry conspiracy at every turn. The assumption behind this attitude is that we are so important that there is a plot to control us and prevent us from developing. Today, however, we see a small country like South Korea competing with France. South Korea has become one of the most important industrial countries in the world, while many developing countries are at a standstill. We are still thinking along the same old lines. Whenever I urge my fellow countrymen to rethink their old conviction, the usual answer is: "You don't know anything. You are like a khawaga [foreign gentleman] because you have been influenced by French and British thought." I chose South Korea as an example because progress there is not limited to industrial development. For instance, they have the best orchestra in the world. You are acquainted with French arrogance and racism. Can you believe that the conductor of the French symphony orchestra is Korean? I could give you examples of other countries, of course, but I can tell you that Korea will become a very important world power in about five years.

[Question] How do you explain the fact that the UN and the international community issue resolutions but do not, at the same time, create a mechanism to implement them?

[Butrus-Ghali] The UN is merely a political apparatus, like a parliament. Why does a parliament issue laws in the interest of certain groups and not others? If you are smart and command influence, you will get a resolution issued in your interest. If you do not have influence, you would not get a resolution passed or a resolution will be passed but it would not be implemented. We should remember Egyptian proverbs. One of them says: "He who has backing won't be hit in the stomach." The same is true of the international community. A weak group of nations may be able to get a resolution passed but the resolution will not be implemented. This reminds me of what happened when Mahmud Fahmi al-Nuqrashi, Egypt's prime minister in 1946, went to the UN to demand that the Anglo-Egyptian treaty be

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

annulled. At the time, I had just started writing for the press. We viewed the UN as a high court which would pass judgement fairly. But what did al-Nuqrashi Pasha find? They said to him in the UN: Go back again and negotiate with the British. He came back and considered himself a hero because he had insulted the British in the Security Council.

[Question] Does not the large number of Third World countries in the UN and your presence as a representative of the Third World have any influence on the resolutions that are issued?

[Butrus-Ghali] It is not enough. The crucial factor is the political will of a nation to play a role on the international scene. This political will is not dependent, merely, on the actual power of the nation. I will give you an example of a country divided, torn apart and collapsed: Yugoslavia. Starting at the first summit conference of the nonaligned movement in September 1961 and until the death of its president Tito in 1981, Yugoslavia played the role of a big power, because the crucial factor was political will. Third World countries do not attach enough importance to foreign policy, which is what can influence resolutions. When you say that there is only one nation that has influence in the UN, I tell you that you are right. The truth is that other countries do not concern themselves enough with this international apparatus. Russia should play its part in the international community. I have gone to Korea, China, Argentina, Mexico and Brazil and asked them to do the same thing. This way we shall come closer to international democracy.

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Says Iran, 'Other Parties Ordered' Police Murders

JN2305194196 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 May 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Palestinian Legislative Council decided to present the draft constitution within two weeks. Justice Minister Furayh Abu-Middayn stressed the importance of this constitution. He said that it is necessary to thoroughly draft this constitution given its importance. Abu-Middayn said a committee was formed by President Yasir 'Arafat to fulfill this task.

The Legislative Council is still in session at al-Shawwa Cultural Center in Gaza. The council discussed, in the presence of President Yasir 'Arafat, reports submitted by the security and internal committees. [passage omitted]

President 'Arafat asserted that there have been attempts to strike against the National Authority, adding that Iran and other parties ordered the murders of some police and security men. President 'Arafat once again unveiled the existence of talks and meetings between Palestinian extremists and Avishay Raviv, head of the radical Israeli Eyal Organization. The president said that the objective of Eyal Organization and those who met with its officials is to undermine the peace process. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Zahhar Denies Meeting With Shaykh Yasin

JN2305162496 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1500 GMT 23 May 96

[Interview with Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar, Hamas member, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given; broadcast in progress—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Zahhar] ...In fact, I did not meet with Shaykh Ahmad, although I wish I could do so. Hence, this report is untrue.

[Correspondent] How do you explain the fact that your name was mentioned with Shaykh Ahmad Yasin in such an Israeli electoral political process?

[Al-Zahhar] It is clear that those playing this role want to benefit from two factors: First, they seek to intensify the atmosphere between those inside and those outside the territories regarding various positions. Second, they want to benefit from the elections. On Friday, we refused to be a party to the elections in Israel.

I did not meet with Shaykh Yasin, although I wish I could do so. Hence, I did not request anything from him. In fact, Shaykh Ahmad Yasin assesses things well. He also has a distinguished political awareness and he is aware of the interest of the [Islamic Resistance] Movement [Hamas] more than others.

Moreover, Shaykh Yasin knows about the Movement's destiny under these circumstances. He can actually say and do—even in his jail— whatever serves Islam, the Muslims, and the Palestinian people's cause.

[Correspondent] Does this mean that Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar, from his current political position, supports in advance any initiative that could be made by Shaykh Ahmad Yasin to suspend the operations against Israel?

[Al-Zahhar] Yes.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Zahhar's Call For Halt to Anti-Israel Operations Lauded

JN2305195496 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Path Movement [harakat al-masar al-islami] in Palestine welcomed a call by Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar, spokesman for Hamas [Islamic Resistance] Movement, to Hamas members to stop military operations against Israel. Shaykh 'Awni Zannun, deputy secretary general of the Path Movement, said that his movement highly values al-Zahhar's courage.

Shaykh Zannun asserted that Hamas Movement's leadership inside the Palestinian territories owns the decision. Zannun's statements came in response to statements by Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman for Hamas abroad, to the effect that al-Zahhar does not represent anybody.

Palestinian Affairs: Abu-Rudaynah Reacts to Israeli Paper's Report on Jerusalem

NC2305201696 Cairo MENA in English 1934 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Gaza, 23 May (MENA)—Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat, characterized the report carried by today's Israeli newspaper YEDI'OT AHARONOT about Jerusalem as merely thoughts published by the press.

No detailed ideas have been tabled during the negotiations regarding the status of the city of Jerusalem, Abu-Rudaynah stressed in statements to the MENA correspondent here.

YEDI'OT AHARONOT said Israel suggests as a solution to the issue of Jerusalem that the villages of Abu Dis and (al-Humayzarish), adjacent to Jerusalem, be made a Palestinian capital under the name of al-Quds or Jerusalem.

The Palestinian position is grounded on the fact east Jerusalem is part of the Arab territories occupied during the 1967 war, the adviser said.

The Palestinians cannot accept any final settlement that does not recognize their right to self-determination or have east Jerusalem as the capital of the Palestinian state, he added.

Palestinian Affairs: Gaza Security Chief Says Forces 'Ready To Deploy' in Hebron

JN2305202196 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Majayidah, commander of the Palestinian National Security Forces in Gaza Governorate, said Palestinian forces are ready to deploy in the city of Hebron once the Israeli army withdraws. He said extensive preparations are taking place in the meantime to provide these forces with the necessary equipment. Maj. Gen. al-Majayidah noted that 313 personnel of al-Aqsa troops that were stationed in the Arab arena returned home recently. He added that negotiations are currently under way to secure the return of 27 members of these troops who were earlier denied entry by the occupation troops.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: Israeli, PA Dispute Over Rafah Airport Settled

TA2205181896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 22 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israel and the Palestinian Authority [PA] have settled their dispute over the operation of the Palestinian airport in Rafah. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the airport will be defined as a special zone, regardless of its location on the maps appended to the interim agreements, and Israel will be exclusively responsible for security in the entire area of the airport and its terminals.

Major General Oren Shahor, coordinator of activities in the territories, and PA official Jamil al-Tarifi this evening signed a memorandum of understanding about the establishment and operation of the airport at Dahaniya near Rafah. The sides will sign a detailed protocol concerning the operation and management of the airport within a month, and in the meantime the Palestinians will go on building the airport.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Algeria

Algeria: GIA Claims To Have Killed Kidnapped French Monks

LD2305161796 Paris LCI Television in French 1606 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Here is a report which has just reached me. The Armed Islamic Group, GIA, said today that it has killed the seven French monks kidnapped almost two months ago in Algeria.

The statement has not yet been verified by the French authorities.

Algeria: France Repeats Call for All Nationals To Leave

LD2305201796 Paris Radio France International in French 1730 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Algeria — In a statement that has not yet been verified, the Armed Islamic Group [GIA] says today that on Tuesday [21 May] morning it killed the seven French Trappist monks kidnapped almost two months ago. [passage omitted]

France has just formally called on all French people, including monks, to leave Algeria. Here is Foreign Ministry spokesman Yves Doutriaux:

[Begin Doutriaux recording] It is not the first time that we have called for this. We are reiterating this formal call for everyone — particularly those who live in isolation and particularly French monks — to leave Algeria, because this news, this report, this statement — if it is authenticated — would once again confirm the extreme danger of the presence in Algeria of isolated people. [end recording]

Algeria: Parliamentary Talks Held With Pakistani Senate Delegation

LD2305220896 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Pakistani Senate delegation, which has been in our country since yesterday on an official visit, held talks today with a delegation from the Transitional National Council. The issues that the two sides dealt with concentrated mainly on the new world trade relations. Nacera Toumi:

[Toumi] The Algerian-Pakistani talks, which took place at the headquarters of the Transitional National Council between president of the council Abdelkader Bensalah, and Pakistani Senate Chairman Wasim Sajjad, dealt with international and regional issues of common concern. The talks were extended to include the two countries' delegations, during which the two sides exchanged points of view on a number of issues, among which were those in relation to the new world economic relations, the challenge that should be confronted within the framework of economic and social development, and the need to confront terrorism that targets, among others, a number of Islamic countries.

The two sides also reviewed the status of bilateral relations and the prospect of their development, particularly those in connection with the parliamentary sphere. [passage omitted]

Algeria: Zeroual Briefs Ministers on National Developments

LD2305113796 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 22 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Algerian President Liamine Zeroual presided over a Council of Ministers' meeting today.

The meeting, which came on the eve of the resumption of dialogue and consultations with the national forces, was an opportunity for the president, in his preliminary address, to touch on a number of issues connected with the effort to strengthen democratic pluralism and normalize our country's institutional life, something our people greatly desire.

The president began by saying that if national dialogue, which began in 1994, had not achieved all its objectives, it had permitted an improved awareness of the nature of the crisis and a better knowledge of the ways and means to overcome it completely.

The president pointed out that the resumption of national dialogue last April fell once more within this confirmed desire aimed at supporting democratic pluralism and completing the electoral process, as the Algerian people had clearly expressed on 16 November 1995.

Mr. Liamine Zeroual added that, in addition to the evident usefulness and benefit that result from any dialogue or consultation, it should be emphasized that all sides that had been consulted recently were fully aware of the difficulties that needed to be overcome and the efforts needed to be exerted in this direction.

On the other hand, the president pointed out that the readiness that appeared during the consultation meetings was a factor that clearly indicated the great maturity, which characterized the democratic practice in our country in the face of the numerous challenges all Algerians should confront.

The president added that, proceeding from this spirit, the rich diversity of the views expressed could only be an effective unifying factor, so long as the common

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

interest of all Algerians was to contribute toward a final return to a permanent normalization of the life of our country's institutions.

When he touched on the requirements and guarantees that consolidate the restitution of stability for the institutions, the president said that, in his view, achieving this goal constituted the absolute priority with regard to every attempt aimed at making available the conditions and necessary means for strengthening democratic pluralism, continuing the electoral process, and consequently restoring calm and permanent tranquility for citizens. This decisive factor, the president added, could not be achieved completely if precautions for it were not taken in advance by institutionalizing it. The lesson obtained from past experiences, the president said, was living evidence of that. We should today protect Algerian society so it will not be exposed once again to instability in any form, because it could, as everyone knows, have dire consequences for our nation's future.

The president said we all know the time factor is considered decisive for the settlement of problems and the development of some critical conditions. There is neither an exemplary method of treatment nor immediate formulas for a solution to a problem that is political in essence, but there is, before anything, men's maturity and the recognition of national interest without negligence. [passage omitted]

We follow the rest of the Council of Ministers' statement with Khaira Sa'di, who is with me in the studio:

[Sa'di] Good evening. Following this preliminary statement by the president, the Council of Ministers listened to a presentation by Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia on the government's activities since the last meeting of the council. The council also listened to presentations by the foreign minister on the diplomatic situation, the interior minister on the security situation, and the finance minister on the economic situation.

The council also discussed and approved a draft law on endorsing the agreement connected with Cospas-Sarsat, the international program on using satellites for search and rescue, which will be put forwarded to the Transitional National Council. [passage omitted]

The Council of Ministers also discussed and approved executive draft laws connected with endorsing partnership contracts over the oil and gas fields currently being exploited by Sonatrach and foreign companies. [passage omitted]

The president stressed the need to implement partnership agreements with our trade partners to strengthen our links with them, particularly with the EU, which will be a favored partner. It is the first stage, said the president, in searching for our foreign financial balances and completely eliminating the danger that threatens our economy from the fluctuations of the international market.

Finally, the Council of Ministers discussed the program for reforming the judicial institutions. The president said it should be characterized by reason and sobriety in the effective use of the allocated means. [passage omitted]

After discussing all the points on the agenda, the president offered some observations in the following statement: Algeria has begun a new era in its history and has, with this noticeable progress, recorded a promising page in its rich contemporary history, which is written by its people with great courage and merit. [passage omitted]

Algeria: Parties React to Memorandum on Political Future

LD2405101596 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Liamine Zeroual's memorandum addressed to the partners in the national dialogue is still attracting the attention of political and media circles.

Among the political reactions in this respect, Hachemi Cherif, coordinator of the Ettahadi Movement, pointed out that the future of the country's republican character is linked to the relationship between politics and religion. Hachemi Cherif said in a statement published in the daily L'OPINION that the future of the republican character is at stake. He concluded by saying that the formation of political parties is conditional on their programs being in harmony with the approved constitutional and institutional framework.

The National Party for Solidarity and Development, for its part, praised the gigantic efforts made within the national dialogue, considering that the discussion currently under way on the memorandum is a civilized initiative. It considers that the creation of a two-chamber parliament conforms with democratic traditions, and suggested that the electoral law should stipulate proportional representation.

Algeria: Former Prime Minister Reacts to President's Memorandum

LD2405100696 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Among the reactions to the presidency's memorandum on promoting dialogue, Redha Malek, the leader of the Republican National Alliance, organized today a seminar in Setif in which he touched

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

on a number of issues connected with his political movement, the situation in the country and the Republican National Alliance's position regarding the memorandum. Malek said the following:

[Begin Malek recording] Frankly, we have received this memorandum with satisfaction. We have received with full satisfaction the general orientation and framework of this memorandum, because it concentrates on important points which concern us — in connection with the state, in connection with the Algerian nation, in connection with the republican framework and in connection with the establishment of democracy and pluralism in our country. We approve the general framework of this memorandum, but there are of course suggestions which concern many subjects included in this memorandum. We shall respond to issues in connection with, for instance, amending the constitution, the political parties' law, the electoral law and the date of these elections and the whole of this process. We shall respond to all these dossiers by our proposals which, in our view, will strengthen the march towards emerging from this crisis and consolidating the constants of the democratic and modern Algerian state. [end recording]

Algeria: Profile of Fida, Armed Wing of Djaz'arist Tendency

LD2305221396 Algiers EL WATAN in French 9 May 96 p 3

[Article by Salima Tlemcani: "Fida: The Armed Wing of the Djaz'ara"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The operation carried out by the security forces in various areas of the capital has seriously weakened the Fida. This "commando" is in fact the "armed wing" of the Djaz'arist tendency [believing in Islamic state specific to Algeria].

This tendency emerged at the Bab Ezzouar University [in Algiers] when Anouar Haddam and Mohamed Boudjelkha taught there. These two were the founders of this political movement. According to this movement, Algerian Islam must be given an Algerian specific character, using the concepts developed by the so-called moderate Islamist tendency in order to distinguish it from the Salafists [neo-orthodox brand of Islamic reformism preaching the return to the teachings of the pious forefathers], espousing the most extremist of religious attitudes.

A wide propaganda movement invaded the university circles, particularly in Algiers in the beginning of 1990. Left-wing militants were often violently attacked by the followers of this movement. A meticulous work was done to record all the people whom, with their intellectual or political capabilities, could represent a threat to the movement. In order to avoid any infiltration and guarantee strong solidarity, they [founders of the movement] resorted to creating family ties between them through marriages.

The imprisonment of the leaders of the banned FIS [Islamic Salvation Front], the ending of the electoral process, and the pressure brought upon the activities of the banned parties by the security forces, forced some Djaz'arists to go underground and a great number of others to take the road of exile.

It is particularly those who chose to be active abroad that are currently leading this movement. Hence the idea of creating an "armed wing" of the Djaz'arists in Algiers. The recruitment of the members of this "organization" called Fida, is done in a very selective way. Only those elements who are thought to possess strong intellectual clout are sought. Their first missions were to attack members of the security forces and take their weapons.

The second phase — the main one so to speak — concerns assassinations and attacks with car bombs, targeting state institutions and the press. After more than a year of activity, the Fida has been eliminated by the security forces on one hand and by Djamel Zitouni [leader of Armed Islamic Group — GIA] who regarded the "organization" as a potential rival on the other. It was in fact for this reason that Zitouni executed Abdelwahab Lamara, then the amir of Fida. It took only a few months for the latter to reemerge again and name a new amir.

The latter is Brahimi Mohamed, known as Abou-Houmman, who is the cousin of Mustapha Brahimi, who is living in Switzerland along with Mourad Dhina, Mustapha Habes, Aba Aroua, Said Lahlali, and Tabet El Awel.

It was thanks to this cousin of Geneva that the new Fida leader managed to take over the leadership of Fida. It was also thanks to the new "strategy" developed by the other leaders of the Djaz'ara movement, such as Ali Boudjedar who is living in France, Rachid Messaoudi who is exiled in Great Britain, Mohamed Boudjelkha who first went to the United States and then settled in Malaysia, and Anouar Haddam "the protege of Washington," that he managed to revive Fida and eliminate the GIA of Zitouni, while continuing to get rid of all intellectuals who might threaten the "plan of the Djaz'ara." Finally, one must stress that the threat of Fida resides in the fact that it is led by Algerians, among whom a great number are "controlled" by foreign intelligence services.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Algeria: Article on Political Parties Disputing Zeroual's Approach

LD2305221196 Algiers EL WATAN in French 9 May 96 p 1

[Article by Amar Maamar: "Election Process: Zeroual's Approach Disputed"]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Zeroual's approach to the accomplishment of the electoral process does not seem to have gained — on the question of election dates at least — the approval of all the political parties that have taken part in the recent round of national dialogue.

The possibility of holding a referendum on the revision of the constitution before the organization of elections — as revealed by the president in his news conference — has been welcomed with reservation by some and with concern by others. In fact, only the content of the memorandum — with which the president committed himself to informing public opinion and political parties on the results of the dialogue — would give those who took part in the presidential elections some clear idea about the real intentions of the regime. Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], the RCD [Rally for Culture and Democracy], and the PRA [Algerian Renewal Party] have been cautious in their response and have abstained from stating their final position regarding Zeroual's election proposals.

Hamas, the party of Mahfoud Nahnah, has in fact criticized the proposals of the president while welcoming with satisfaction the holding of the news conference. In a communique issued yesterday, the Islamist movement said a revision of the constitution of 1989 in the absence of an elected national assembly would be unconstitutional.

On the other hand, the postponement of the general elections until the first half of next year means, according to Hamas, an extension of the transition period and a prolongation of the crisis.

Concerning the national conference, scheduled to take place before the end of the summer next year, the same party wished for "the participation of all those who are capable of contributing to the resolution of the crisis, without exception."

More skeptical is the RCD, which said that it was very worried about what the president intended to do, particularly not holding general and local elections this year. "Only the security aspect could be used as an argument justifying the postponement of the elections," said Benyounes [RCD official] whom we contacted by phone yesterday. This argument contradicts what the president had said when he stressed "the daily improvement of the security situation."

In this context, the RCD believes that the president and the current executive would have a free hand to run the country for nearly two years. In addition, the party of Said Sadi, has argued that short of a political party, the current regime is buying time by postponing the general and local elections.

Concerning the national conference, the RCD would like more information on the agenda of such a conference and the status of its participants. Thus, the RCD is waiting for the publication of the memorandum that is expected to "give more details on the way the personalities who would run the conference would be designated." Regarding the news conference of the president, our interlocutor wished the latter had taken place after the publication of the memorandum, i.e. after public opinion and political parties had been informed about the results of the dialogue and the intentions of the president.

As for the PRA, it showed more understanding and declared that "the content of the news conference was not a surprise as the president had already talked about it during the rounds of the national dialogue." The party of Boukrouh believes that the priority is the search for a wider consensus around the approach thus presented. This could be achieved at the national conference. Concerning the revision of the constitution, the PRA believes that this should be carried out within the framework of the cleansing of national political life.

The PRA said it was still waiting for the memorandum, while at the same time it described the postponement of the elections for one year as reasonable.

Algeria: Prime Minister Announces Free Trade Zone in Jijel Province

LD2405101396 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] After Jijel Province, Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia is expected today in Mila Province on a working and inspection visit.

The prime minister yesterday concluded his visit to Jijel Province by a meeting with representatives of the civil community during which he announced the creation of a free zone behind the iron and steel complex in Blara.

In his replies to questions from representatives of the civil community who attended the lecture hall at the administrative district in Jijel where the rally was held, the prime minister said this decision had been taken because the area, which had tourism and agricultural potential, could become a center for progress and prosperity.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Ouyahia said the decision had also been taken to respond to the citizens' demands and to the rationality and practicality of economic management.

The prime minister announced, moreover, the granting to Jijel Province of 100 million additional dinars to finance development projects in the province, its districts and municipalities. The prime minister recommended that 10 million dinars of this grant be spent on social organizations of Algeria's young people to help them in the field of cadre training and employment.

Algeria: Medea Court Passes 11 Death Sentences in Absentia

LD2305185996 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The criminal court in Medea yesterday Wednesday [22 May] passed 11 death sentences in absentia after considering, the same day, three criminal cases. Five persons were accused in a case concerning the setting up of an armed group to spread death and destruction. Three others were convicted in a second case concerning premeditated murder.

Egypt

Egypt: Al-Qadhdhafi To Arrive in Cairo 25 May

NC2405093596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0905 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 24 May (MENA)—Colonel Mu'ammar al- Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution, will arrive in Cairo tomorrow on a visit to Egypt during which he will meet President Husni Mubarak.

Col. al-Qadhdhafi is scheduled to arrive later today in Marsa Matruh, where he will spend the night. He will leave Marsa Matruh tomorrow morning for Cairo accompanied by Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif.

Egypt: Libyan Communications, Transport Official Arrives

NC2405060596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2210 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 24 May (MENA)—Engineer 'Izz-al-Din al-Hamshari, Libyan minister of transport and communications [title as received], arrived in Cairo tonight leading a delegation on a two-day visit to Egypt.

Egypt: Armed Forces Receive 600 Armored Vehicles From Netherlands

NC2305173796 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1315 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 23 May—Field Marshal Husayn Tantawi, commander in chief of the Egyptian Armed Forces and minister of defense and war production, has stated that the Egyptian Armed Forces are fully aware of the missions assigned to them. He said: We are confident we can defend Egypt on every front and at all times.

At a news conference at the close of the Armed Forces' annual strategic project "Haris 33," he said there are plans for joint exercises with various Arab countries. We are developing these exercises until we see all the Arab countries holding joint exercises with each other. This serves the national security of the Arab region.

Asked about 600 modern armored vehicles recently received from the Netherlands, Field Marshal Tantawi said armament plans are proceeding in the correct direction as part of the State's policy of diversifying its sources of weapons. He said the Armed Forces will acquire other state of the art weapons besides the 600 modern armored vehicles from the Netherlands. The Armed Forces' plan is based on developing, modernizing, and increasing the lifespan of their weapons, besides acquiring new modern weapons.

Field Marshal Tantawi said some of the Armed Forces' training exercises are held annually and some are held every five years. He added that the strategic project "Haris 33" is one of the main projects for training high-ranking commanders and ascertaining their comprehension of their mobilization tasks. He noted that there are always changes in senior posts and that the general command trains new commanders to ensure that they are qualified to take charge of armies, regions, organizations, and various administrations.

Field Marshal Tantawi said these exercises are not targeted against any state in the region. Their aim is to upgrade the Egyptian Armed Forces and keep them constantly prepared to defend Egypt's borders. [passage omitted]

Egypt: Commentator Views Israeli Elections, Peace Process

NC2305153996 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 23 May 96

[Commentary by Muhammad Sharaf: "Objective Remarks on Next Week's Israeli Elections"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Every chance it gets Egypt tries to affirm the importance of adhering to the basic

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

principle on which the Arab-Israeli peace process is based — the land-for-peace principle. The reason for Egypt's continuing desire to confirm this is its deep comprehension that there can be no peace between the Arab countries and Israel as long as this principle is not applied precisely. We state this as we express a few important points regarding the Israeli elections—now, when the election campaign has climaxed under a week before the election on Wednesday [29 May].

Everyone knows that peace is the main issue in these elections. We take the initiative here to confirm Egypt's stance on these elections, a stance President Husni Mubarak clarified in many statements. This stance can be summarized in that Egypt and the Arab countries in general deal with Israel as a state irrespective of the ruling party there and its policies. This leads us to express our first remark on the peace process regarding the games of one-upmanship between the two most prominent Israeli parties competing in these elections. This remark is that either of the two parties, the ruling Labor Party or the Likud Bloc, or any other Israeli party for that matter, could set out any conditions they like for establishing peace with the Arab sides. But this does not mean they can impose these conditions on any of the Arab sides. Any peace agreement will be a contract between the two sides. True, the Israeli occupation is a fait accompli. It is also true that some sides in Israel believe they can bargain on the basis of this fait accompli to impose particular conditions. But there are some things in the Arab-Israeli peace process that cannot be bargained over. Foremost of these is the need for Israel to withdraw from all the occupied Arab territories, a withdrawal not linked with conditions that affect the sovereignty or legitimate rights of any Arab side or at the expense of the basic demands of any of these sides or comprehensive joint Arab security. Proceeding from this point, if any of the two big parties in Israel, the Labor Party or the Likud Bloc, believe they can realize peace without responding to the condition of full and unconditional withdrawal from the Arab territories, they are cheating themselves and the Israeli voters along with them.

The second remark is that the attempt to appease the extremists and zealots in Israel in these elections could expose the peace process to dangers that will only keep the struggle and counterviolence going, including all the resulting human and material losses. The extremists and zealots on both sides, the Arab and the Israeli, have no alternative to peace. With regard to the Israeli extremists and fanatics, everyone knows that Israel's military force, whether through the advanced conventional weapons or the nuclear weapons, cannot realize peace and security for the Israeli people. What can realize this security is the peace that is accepted by the Arab people.

The third remark is that peace with the Arab countries, be it with the sides directly involved in the peace negotiations or those not directly involved, is an indivisible whole. Peace must be comprehensive for it to bear its full fruits and for it to acquire its true meaning.

The fourth remark is that the current opportunity for peace through the ongoing peace process, which has come a long way, cannot be retrieved if it is wasted now. There remains one last remark: All the signs confirm the need to push the peace process forward and speed it up as much as practically possible. Peace is in the interest of all the parties without exception. It could also keep many unnecessary dangers away from many people. Let us wait and see what events and developments bring.

Sudan

Sudan: Al-Bashir Discusses CAR Situation With President Patasse

EA2405102796 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, president of the Republic, held a telephone conversation at noon today with President Ange-Felix Patasse of the Central African Republic [CAR], during which he reassured himself of Patasse's health.

For his part, President Patasse briefed the president of the Republic on developments in his country following the rebellion led by Army elements. He told him of the progress of negotiations currently under way between the government and the rebels.

The president of the Republic assured his Brother Patasse of Sudan's eagerness to see security and stability established in Patasse's country. He expressed the hope that the CAR will soon be able to overcome this crisis so that the people can devote themselves to construction and development.

Meanwhile, the Foreign Ministry issued a statement today explaining that Sudan has been monitoring the recent events in the CAR with concern. Out of concern for stability and security in the region and the sisterly neighbor, Sudan appeals to the African family and the international community to stand alongside the CAR people and government that they can overcome the crisis.

The Foreign Ministry confirmed that all Sudanese individuals in the CAR are well and in constant contact with the Sudanese Embassy there.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Sudan: Al-Bashir Comments on UN Resolution Against Country

EA2305105196 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 22 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, president of the Republic, has asserted that UN Security Council Resolution No. 1054 was not issued out of understanding for Sudan's position but because the United States sought to issue the resolution, irrespective of Sudan's stance and the proof it submitted.

In an interview with the Qatari AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT newspaper, Lt. Gen. al-Bashir said efforts at dialogue will continue with all states, including the United States which backs the resolution. The president of the Republic revealed that numerous states are not convinced that the resolution is right but they will meet the minimum requirements to comply with the resolution without it affecting their relations with Sudan.

Lt. Gen. al-Bashir reaffirmed Sudan's rejection of linking terrorism with whatever is Arab and Islamic. He pointed out that the United States speaks of human rights violations in Sudan but that this is unfounded, as Sudan is devoid of political detainees.

Sudan: Al-Turabi on Egypt, Sanctions, Arab Unity

MM2205133096 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 18 May 96 pp 1, 4

[Report on interview with Sudanese National Assembly Speaker Hasan al-Turabi, in Damascus, by Nidal Ma'ruf in London; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, speaker of the Sudanese National Assembly, has criticized AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in an attack in which he called it "Khadra' al-Diman" [a good plant that grows in filthy soil]. This analogy was made by the Prophet, may God bless his soul and grant him grace, in one of his Hadiths in which he warned against pretty women who grow up in a bad environment and thus become affected by it.

Dr. al-Turabi's attack on AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT came in statements he made in the Syrian capital, where he was attending the international parliamentary conference. He criticized AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT for its recent publication of statements about the normalization of relations between Sudan and Israel, something he categorically denied.

Laughing hilariously, Dr. al-Turabi said: I do not attack anyone despite what has been published. But there has never been nor will there ever be any normalization in relations with Israel, though Sudan would not criticize or attack any of the countries that have normalized or will normalize relations with the Hebrew state.

Al-Turabi told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: We do not want to squander our efforts on marginal issues and we work to direct these efforts against countries which seek to impose a siege on the countries of the region.

Replying to a question from AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT as to whether the current Arab Parliamentary Union conference plans to adopt a resolution affirming the boycott of Israel, Dr. al-Turabi said: This is something which the Arab peoples hope for. But I do not think that the regimes are on their way to realizing this hope.

When Sudanese President General 'Umar al-Bashir was asked during a press interview last week whether contacts have actually taken place with Israel, he did not deny them.

When al-Bashir was asked about the veracity of reports that during his recent tour of some Arab countries the Sudanese minister for council of ministers' affairs had indirect contacts with Israel, al-Bashir replied (smiling): "These visits were part of wide-scale contacts which the Sudanese Government has made in a number of world countries basically to explain Sudan's position toward the UN Security Council resolution. In the same context, I have personally visited some countries. We have also sent emissaries to some countries and had telephone contacts with others."

In his statements to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, al-Turabi, asked about the Hala'ib problem between Sudan and Egypt and how long it will continue, replied: "Do you want the truth? I would not be surprised if this problem continued for another century. This is because the Hala'ib borders were demarcated between the British and the Egyptians when Egypt and Britain were two colonial powers in Sudan about a century ago. They recognized Sudan's independence about 40 years later. However, Egypt discovered later that the border lines were not right and so they were redrawn. Hence I would not be surprised, indeed I do not consider it unlikely, if the Hala'ib problem were to continue for another century."

Asked about the way to resolve this problem, he said: "The world order now is based on force. The problem will continue until such time as the United States mediates and arbitrates between us and Egypt."

Asked if he thought there was another way of resolving this problem, al-Turabi said: So far I do not know. But Hala'ib is a small piece of land which would add nothing to either Egypt or Sudan. It is only being used as a pretext to create tension in the relations because Egypt wants to manifest wardship over Sudan. Because

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Egypt colonized Sudan at one time and it is natural for the colonizer to constantly entertain feelings of dominance and find it difficult to see the state or country which it colonized attain its independence and develop and acquire an identity other than that chosen for it by the colonizer. Sudan has unanimously affirmed the independence of its territory. He added: The Arabs are a poor lot and can do nothing.

Asked about meeting of the Arab parliamentarians to discuss ways to eliminate differences among them and unify the Arab position, and whether the deliberations and the meetings held have succeeded in eliminating these differences, Dr. al-Turabi said: The Arab parliamentarians have succeeded in mobilizing Arab feelings and attaining solidarity in respect of the Lebanese issue only. He added that troubles sometimes bring the afflicted closer together.

He denied that he had met with Ahmad Fathi Surur, the speaker of the Egyptian parliament, or that attempts had taken place to arrange a meeting between them and bring their views closer together. He said: "I can do nothing and he can do nothing when it is a matter of a conflict between governments." He added: I am ready to meet with any responsible Egyptian official and we have no stringent position in this regard. The unity of the Nile Valley has existed and will continue to exist.

Asked whether the question of Sudan's being accused of terrorism was raised during the meetings, he replied: This matter was not raised as a principal issue. Sudan asked the Arabs to show solidarity with it particularly in resisting the imposition of economic sanctions against it.

Asked if he thought the Arab countries will implement the UN resolution imposing economic and diplomatic sanctions against Sudan, he said: This depends on the American method of implementation. But I believe that the majority of the Arab countries, though not all, will prevent compliance with that resolution. He added: As to the question of embassies, what is the meaning of dropping the number of diplomats from five to four or from 10 to nine? It does not mean anything.

Asked if Sudan plans to close its embassies in the Arab countries, al-Turabi said: This will happen if the Arab countries close their embassies. Sudan has embassies in some Arab countries that do not have embassies in Khartoum, Lebanon for example. Sudan is very anxious to extend its hand to any Arab that extends its hand to it. He added: It is not true that embassies would be closed for austerity purposes.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Iraq: U.S., UK Blamed for People's Suffering Under Sanctions

JN2305125196 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0640 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 23 May (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH says it holds the United States, Britain, and Zionism responsible for the continued suffering of the Iraqi people due to these countries' insistence on continuing the blockade clamped on them.

In an analysis published today, AL-THAWRAH, with speaks for the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, says: The United States and Britain, backed by Zionism, added another four months to the Iraqi people's harsh suffering and tried to foil the talks between Iraq and the United Nations on oil for food, medicine, and other basic needs.

The paper adds: Out of its concern for alleviating the Iraqi people's suffering, the Iraqi leadership, through its courage, wisdom, and patience, managed to sign an agreement with the United Nations to bolster the Iraqis' steadfastness and to encourage them to pursue the struggle to lift the blockade completely and to resume their awakening and legitimate regional, pan-Arab, and international role without relinquishing their values and principles.

The paper ridicules the U.S. Administration's claims that it allowed this agreement to be signed out of its concern for the Iraqi people's suffering. AL-THAWRAH says: The U.S. Administration is angry. It believes that the Arabs and the other people of the world have no memory and are stupid enough to believe the U.S. killer's false claims about sparing the Iraqi victims further suffering.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: The Iraqis are happy with what their leadership has accomplished for them. They are more determined than ever to maintain their national unity and sovereignty over every inch of their national soil. If Washington, London, Tel Aviv, and their allies vent all their rancor, greed, and aggression against the Arab nation, the Iraqi people promise that what the world has seen since the 17-30 July Revolution is only part of their steadfastness, patience, wisdom, and methods of resistance against invaders and aggressors and that they are still capable of surprising those who only want to please the allies.

Iraq: U-2 Overflights Protested to UN

JN2305144596 Baghdad INA in English 1118 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New York, May 23, INA — Iraq protested to the UN on the violation of the American spying plane (U-2) of Iraq's airspace under the pretext of implementing aerial survey for the UN Special Committee.

In a message delivered on Wednesday [22 May] by Iraq's permanent representative in the UN Nizar Hamdun to the president of the Security Council, Iraq's Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf said this plane, which took off from Saudi Arabia, has continued its violation to Iraq's airspace for more than (1336/50) hours until the end of April 1996.

The minister called the UN to reconsider the question of using this plane by the United States of America to violate Iraq's airspace in contrary to the UN Charter. He also called for respecting all member-states sovereignty.

He stressed Iraq's right in demanding of compensation for damages caused by these violations, calling for using Iraq's means in the work of the Special Committee instead of the foreign means to exclude any possibilities of using these means in undermining Iraq's sovereignty and security.

Iraq: UN Envoy Hamdun on Oil-for-Food Talks

MM2305160196 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 May 96 p 2

[Interview with Ambassador Nizar Hamdun, Iraqi delegate to the United Nations, by Khalil Matar in New York; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Matar] What was the reason for this delay in accepting the formula [contained in the Iraqi-UN Memorandum of Understanding on oil-for-food], considering that the final result did not succeed in meeting most of the points sought by Iraq?

[Hamdun] Like all negotiations between any two sides, the final result is usually something more or less in the middle, on which both sides agree. During their negotiations the two sides give and take and exchange views until they arrive at something acceptable to both of them. That is what has happened in the case of the negotiations between Iraq and the United Nations. We started by putting forward certain reservations which we had concerning some of the provisions of the [UN] Resolution [986]. Most of these reservations were taken into consideration through the wording, making them [the provisions] compatible with the needs of the Iraqi side.

Of course, the Memorandum of Understanding did not change the UN Security Council resolution. The negotiations were not intended to change the council's resolution but rather to draw up a plan for implementing it in a manner which would satisfy the UN interpretation of Resolution 986 and Iraq's well-known reservations at

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

the same time. This plan is embodied in the principles contained in the Memorandum of Understanding.

[Matar] Iraq's reservations were connected with the question of sovereignty particularly with regard to the northern regions. But the final result was achieved despite the insistence of the United Nations, and with it the United States and Britain, on keeping the Iraqi Government out of the northern parts, so can it be said that you have gotten nothing in this regard?

[Hamdun] The Iraqi Government's entry into northern Iraq did not mean, from our point of view, direct entry. As you know, there is no Iraqi authority in any of the three northern provinces, for well-known reasons. But what Iraq was anxious to ensure was that the agreed formula would not consecrate the state of secession under present or future conditions. The return of Iraqi officials to the northern region was not what was sought and we did not ask for this during the negotiations. What we asked for was that the method of distribution in the northern regions be based on the same method to be used in distribution in the other parts of Iraq. This does not mean that Iraqi officials would be the ones to carry out distribution in the north, but rather that the method of distribution in the north should be compatible with the method of distribution in the rest of the country. The same applies to the selection of the "food basket" in terms of quality and quantity. This has been achieved in a satisfactory manner in the agreement.

[Matar] You mean the use of Iraqi ration cards as a basis for distribution in the north as is the case in other parts of Iraq?

[Hamdun] Yes, these ration cards should be the basis. However, the expression "ration cards" was not mentioned in so many words in the Memorandum of Understanding. But the wording gives the same result.

[Matar] The Americans originally rejected this. Why did they change their mind and accept later?

[Hamdun] As I have already said, negotiations always start from two differing and contradictory positions, but in the end the two sides agree on something that satisfies both: Iraq on one side and the United Nations on the other.

[Matar] What, in your opinion, was the effect of the oil market on the negotiations and their results?

[Hamdun] I do not believe, nor do I feel, that this had any effect on the course of the negotiations.

[Matar] How about the effect of the result on the oil market? What will the effect be?

[Hamdun] Definitely there will be an effect. (It is only natural for) the negotiations and the results emanating from them to have repercussions on the oil market. But I am not an oil expert so as to be able to elaborate on the current and future repercussions. But the pumping of Iraqi oil in quantities ranging between 600,000 and 700,000 barrels a day must affect prices, though I cannot say to what degree.

[Matar] What was the effect of the economic situation inside Iraq on your negotiating position?

[Hamdun] Iraq's negotiating position was certainly the result of several conditions including the country's economic conditions. Certainly, any country's leadership must take economic conditions and needs into consideration. Had there not been any economic need, Iraq would perhaps have refused to enter into negotiations on this subject at all.

But I believe that the economic factor was not the only influencing factor. There was another factor which helped to bring about this agreement, namely Iraq's political openness to many international sides that wanted to see Iraq accept and adopt this resolution. I believe that the success scored by the negotiations will help to improve these political relations and, perhaps, create more favorable horizons for the establishment of wider relations and wider vistas for a more comprehensive dialogue.

[Matar] Including with the United States?

[Hamdun] The U.S. side can hardly be expected to take a positive stand, for well-known reasons. But, and as Iraq has repeatedly affirmed, we are ready, any time the U.S. Administration wishes to enter into a dialogue with us, to enter into a dialogue with it on the basis of reciprocal respect and mutual interests.

[Matar] Will American companies get priority in benefiting from these results?

[Hamdun] There are no priorities according to nationalities, be they American or non-American. The question is first and foremost economic, though it also has a political dimension. Iraq will certainly seek to conclude contracts with companies that possess a competitive edge in terms of the quality of the equipment to be supplied as well as prices. This is on the one hand; on the other, Iraq will have to take into consideration, in its choice, the political stances of the various governments.

[Matar] Does this mean that French and Russian companies will be given priority?

[Hamdun] It is too early to go into this subject. The responsible authorities in Baghdad will have to take into consideration both economic and political considerations when the time comes for deciding who to award contracts to.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

[Matar] The message of the chief Iraqi delegate spoke of a Syrian outlet for the exportation of Iraqi oil in the future, though Resolution 986 specifically spoke of two outlets, namely Turkey and al-Bakr port. What is behind this Iraqi reference?

[Hamdun] This reference was made for future purposes. We know it would be very difficult for us now, in accordance with the provisions of the agreement, to use any outlets other than the two mentioned in the resolution. But the reference was made to make it possible in the future, when conditions permit changes in some of the facts, to take this matter into consideration.

[Matar] Has this matter been discussed with Syria and are the Syrians agreeable to it?

[Hamdun] I do not know.

[Matar] Do you think Syria is ready for openness with Iraq?

[Hamdun] The question of Iraqi-Syrian openness has been alive for some time. There are people from both countries discussing it on various levels, both publicly and secretly. It is difficult for me to make any predictions in this regard. All I want to say, however, is that Iraq is ready for such openness. That is clear. But so far, I have not seen any serious gesture on the part of the Syrian side in this regard. But I, and with me all the Iraqis, hope the Syrians will take a positive decision in this respect.

[Matar] Are there any new possibilities for Iraqi openness to other countries in the region?

[Hamdun] Iraq is fully prepared, and we have expressed our readiness on previous occasions. We are still prepared. The matter, however, lies in the hands of the other parties. It would be difficult for Iraq to have openness with the others unless the others also seek such openness.

[Matar] You say that your conditions were the ones that were laid down, the ones that are being carried out, and the ones that have been agreed upon in the Memorandum of Understanding. Is that so?

[Hamdun] The negotiations reached a middle ground. The amendments put forward by the Americans and the British did not remain in the original form in which they were presented. Some of them were revised. Likewise, not everything we wanted remained as it was, for some of this was revised too. As I have already said, there was a need for give and take so that conditions and wording satisfactory to both sides could be reached. We are satisfied with what has finally been arrived at.

[Matar] Do you think the UN secretary general will try to facilitate Iraq's wishes during the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding?

[Hamdun] We believe that the UN secretary general will sincerely implement Resolution 986 in the form it was written and with the intentions expressed by the UN Security Council which are called humanitarian intentions. We believe that the secretary general was very anxious to reach an agreement with Iraq. He is also very anxious to ensure the implementation of the agreement in a clean and serious manner.

[Matar] The UN secretary general has raised the question of a possible increase in the quantities of oil which the UN Security Council would permit to be sold. But the United States opposed this. Were you given any promises for such an increase?

[Hamdun] It is too early to talk about this subject. We have to wait to see how the implementation will proceed and what the results will be in terms of its effect on the humanitarian situation in Iraq.

[Matar] How do you evaluate the role of the UN secretary general in this matter?

[Hamdun] I believe that the UN secretary general has performed his role satisfactorily, not only toward the UN Security Council but also toward Iraq, and so he deserves all gratitude and appreciation for this. We hope the secretary general will continue his efforts to ensure the good and speedy implementation of the resolution, because we are aware that bureaucratic complications and mechanisms might delay, to a certain extent, the implementation of the resolution so that the Iraqi oil can begin to flow. For this reason, the UN secretary general's supervision and follow-up of this matter is essential in order to ensure speedy arrival at the stage of implementation, and consequently the speedy arrival of food and medical and other supplies to the Iraqi people.

[Matar] Will a headquarters for implementation of the agreement be established in Europe? Will someone or some coordinator be appointed to follow and administer the implementation process?

[Hamdun] Supervision will be vested in the hands of the UN secretary general, whether himself personally as the most senior official in this respect, or through his deputy for humanitarian affairs, Yasushi Akashi, and perhaps others with them. There is also the UN Humanitarian Program Administration, which is situated in Baghdad and which is concerned with discussing the distribution plan with Iraqi officials prior to its approval by the UN secretary general and then following up its implementation.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

[Matar] Iraq says that this agreement is the first step on the road to the lifting of the sanctions, while the Americans insist that it is only an exceptional case in respect of the sanctions. Do the Iraqis recognize that the need for this agreement might indicate that the lifting of sanctions is far away?

[Hamdun] The important thing is not to enter into a contest of words. What is important is that we in Iraq, and also many other circles inside and outside the Security Council, believe that the implementation of the resolution in the manner agreed upon constitutes a basic step on the road to the complete lifting of the economic sanctions in accordance with Paragraph 22 of UN Security Council Resolution 687. The implementation of Resolution 986 is not technically linked to Paragraph 22 but this implementation will help to alleviate the sufferings of the Iraqi people, and consequently, from the practical point of view and the point of view of results, it means an alleviation of the situation brought about by the economic sanctions. For this reason, it will help bring closer the question of the total lifting of sanctions and constitutes an important step on this road.

Furthermore, the flow of Iraqi oil into the markets, once it starts, will become an operation that would be difficult to stop under any circumstances. This is what we expect to happen should cooperation proceed well in terms of implementation between Iraq and the (UN) Secretariat General.

[Matar] Once more, may I ask if the lifting of sanctions has become remote?

[Hamdun] I do not want to get involved in making predictions.

[Matar] The Special Committee [under Ekeus] still talks of many problems arising in regard to control and the obtaining of the necessary statements from Iraq about its arms. When you talk of Paragraph 22, this means that Iraq will have to honor its commitments toward the Special Committee. But the Special Committee's statements indicate that attaining this result is still far away. What do you say to that?

[Hamdun] I have not heard anything from the Special Committee to indicate that this is still far away. True, they say the time is not yet suitable for reaching such a conclusion, but they did not say that the process of lifting the economic sanctions in accordance with Paragraph 22 is far away.

[Matar] Why do you not implement what the committee is asking for quickly?

[Hamdun] We do what we can in accordance with the resources available to us to provide the required documents and information and we deal with the committee as fast as we can.

[Matar] You have submitted a large number of so-called final and complete inventories about your armaments. But every time, the Special Committee has said that what you have supplied is not complete and should be revised. Why is that?

[Hamdun] We did not say that the recent inventories (statements) we supplied recently were final. We said that they were drafts for final announcements, in other words, they are liable to be revised and liable to give-and-take in the light of daily dealings between the Iraqi officials and the Special Committee.

[Matar] Do you think that the committee is prolonging its work?

[Hamdun] I do not want to pass judgment on the work of the Committee. That is not my duty. What I want to say is that we are dealing seriously with the Special Committee and have been offering it the maximum possible cooperation.

[Matar] Is there any political significance behind the flow of Iraqi oil across the Turkish territories and Kurdish regions?

[Hamdun] The question of the flow of Iraqi oil across the Turkish territories does not constitute a problem as we have already reached a bilateral agreement with the Turks on this matter. This will help to create a better atmosphere for the improvement of Turkish-Iraqi relations on the political and economic fields which, in turn, will have a good effect on the region as a whole. The same applies to the flow of oil across the Kurdish regions. The implementation of this resolution and the supply of the required humanitarian commodities to the three northern provinces might help place our Kurdish brothers in these provinces in a better atmosphere for establishing contact with the Baghdad and might even go to the extent of the resumption of the dialogue that was previously suspended between Iraq and the Kurdish leaderships.

[Matar] Does the decision in regard to this matter rest in the hands of the Kurdish leaders?

[Hamdun] The matter is left to them, because Baghdad has previously expressed its desire to have contacts with the Kurdish leaders and to return to the pre-1991 situation. Our position remains the same. It is for them to decide the time they deem fit for returning to the Iraqi fold.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Iraq: Trade Minister on Food Distribution to Citizens

JN2305202696 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1910 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 23 May (INA)—Trade Minister Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Salih asserted that Iraq would assume the task of importing and distributing foodstuffs to all citizens equally. He also said that the cost would be covered by the proceedings of oil sales in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the United Nations.

In an interview broadcast on Iraqi television this evening, he said that all inhabitants of Iraq will get equal food shares in terms of quantity and quality, including the citizens of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region. He said that the UN humanitarian program would distribute the foodstuffs on behalf of the Iraqi Government.

The trade minister pointed out that the United States and Britain tried to discriminate among the sons of our people in terms of distributing the foodstuffs by interfering in dialogue between the delegations of Iraq and the UN General Secretariat, but that Iraq insisted on its position and stressed the need to distribute the foodstuffs to all citizens equally and fairly, including our people in the Kurdistan Region.

Regarding the quantity and quality of the foodstuffs to be covered by the ration card in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between Iraq and the United Nations, Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Salih said that these materials would meet all the needs of the citizens and that the ration card would cover additional proteins, which will enable citizens not to have to buy basic foodstuffs from the local market, except those required at certain social occasions.

Iraq: Paper Urges Exploitation of Improved Relations With UN

MM2405100896 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 22 May 96 p 15

[Unattributed article: "Iraq and the Most Important Decision in Its History"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The UN agreement with the Iraqi Government on a partial lifting of the embargo, allowing $1 billion's worth of oil to be exported every three months to purchase food and medicine, is of major importance, not only because it will alleviate the Iraqi people's burden, but also because it is an essential step on the way to restoring confidence and establishing good relations between the Iraqi and UN sides.

Tribute should be paid to the Iraqi people's resilience and steadfastness, which played a key role in bringing about this successful outcome, and to the Iraqi negotiator who, over the past two years, had to put up with the United States' ploys and interference aimed at hindering the agreement, and its resorting to all forms of provocations in order to force the Iraqi side to reject the agreement and withdraw from the negotiations.

Although we recognize that the said agreement will neither solve Iraq's problems, nor provide the necessary food and medicine — the share of each Iraqi being no more than half a dollar per month — it is nonetheless a prelude to good relations which could lead to other steps on the way to a total lifting of the blockade.

Many elements have contributed to achieving this breakthrough which was long awaited by the Iraqis and for which they expressed their joy with dancing and singing in the streets of Baghdad, and which could be summed up as follows:

1. The enormous French, Russian, German, and Chinese pressures exerted inside and outside the Security Council on the United States to reach an agreement and desist from the obstructionist policies which have made the United Nations lose its credibility, and at the same time to convince the Iraqi side to recognize a basic truth, namely that the blockade cannot be lifted all at once, that gradual steps are needed in this context, and that all it can do is improve the mechanics of the implementation and not change the resolution and its clauses.

2. The United Nations' urgent need of funds to finance its international operations, not to mention destroying the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. The United Nations is totally bankrupt and unable to buy paper and stationery for its employees, let alone pay their salaries, because of its colossal budget deficit and the U.S. refusal to fully discharge its commitments.

3. The recent international uproar caused by the negative effects of the blockade on the Iraqi people and supported by statistics and reports from international organizations such as the WHO, FAO [Food and Agriculture Organization], and UNICEF that over half a million Iraqi children have died because of the shortage of medicine, food, and essential hospital equipment. Even U.S. public opinion was beginning to feel uncomfortable with its government's policies with regard to maintaining the blockade.

4. The U.S. Administration's realization that, because of the violations which have taken place, it is impossible to maintain a total blockade, the positive improvement in Syrian-Iraqi relations, and the positive change in Egyptian policy toward Iraq. The Iraqi Government

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

also reached the conclusion that it is impossible to lift the blockade entirely before the U.S. elections; another factor is President Clinton's increased chances of remaining in the White House for another term.

It would be a mistake for the Iraqi decisionmaker to clutch at this agreement, hail it as a great achievement, and not undertake additional bold political steps, both internally and externally, to take advantage of the positive atmosphere prevailing in the world in order to achieve what would preserve him and serve Iraq's interests.

In other words, the improved relations with the United Nations should be exploited to close the armaments file once and for all and refrain from undertaking any steps which would ruin the atmosphere of confidence, achieved by months of negotiations and culminating in the recent agreement. Military industries can wait a while, while the building of an Iraqi civilian industry, an advanced agriculture, a strong economy should top the scale of Iraqi priorities in this crucial phase.

Iraq did the right thing to demand that some oil be exported via the Syrian pipeline. This is a clever step, reflecting good intentions for an Arab opening up to neighboring states. How nice it would be if other openings were also made toward Iran and Turkey, but without falling into an axis game.

It remains to be said that the good, patient, steadfast, and resilient Iraqi people who have foiled all the conspiracies aimed at humiliating them, fragmenting them, and harming their national integrity, these people who have put up with the blockade, starvation, and disease, need a kind gesture and deserve a better reward in the form of bigger participation in the political process through a more dynamic democratic process and wider freedoms, especially the freedom of expression and pluralism.

These exceptional circumstances require an internal democratic opening up. This is the best way to reinforce the decisionmaker in facing up to external pressures. We do not believe that democracy in Iraq should wait for the lifting of the blockade, because this might delay it, whereas introducing it early could hasten the lifting of the blockade.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Israel: Shaykh Yasin Appeal to Hamas Seen as Part of Release Deal

TA2305175296 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 23 May 96

[Video report by Aharon Barne'a]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leader Shaykh Ahmad Yasin appeals from his Israeli prison cell to the Hamas movement and its military arm to stop the attacks against Israel immediately. Yasin also urges them to cooperate with the Palestinian Authority [PA]. Shaykh Yasin made these remarks to a Hamas and PA delegation that visited him in the Ayalon Prison yesterday. This statement is another stage toward the release of Yasin, apparently after the elections. Our correspondent Aharon Barne'a reports:

[Begin recording] [PA official Hisham 'Abd-al-Raziq] Anyone who says that the meeting was held for garnering support for a halt to the attacks until the elections is speaking nonsense.

[Barne'a] This is what 'Abd-al-Raziq, who participated in the meeting of the Hamas people with Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, had to say about the meeting. He claims that the Hamas leader did not deal with the Israeli elections at all.

['Abd-al-Raziq] I can tell you with utter conviction that during the entire meeting not even one word was said about stopping the Hamas attacks until the elections. The aim of the meeting was to facilitate the Hamas-PA agreement and to provide Hamas the opportunity to oppose the agreement democratically — namely, to stop the attacks completely.

[Barne'a] Shaykh Yasin's family in Gaza today understood that by issuing this statement the shaykh was actually fulfilling his part in the deal that will bring about his release after the elections. [passage omitted]

Shaykh Yasin's two sons visited their father in prison today for the first time in six years, returning home with pictures — even one in which the paralyzed shaykh is seen supported standing on his own two feet. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Israel: Iranian Efforts To Topple Peres Government Described

TA2305184396 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (LEHAG supplement) in Hebrew 23 May 96 pp 8, 9

[Article by Orly Azulay-Katz: "Terrorism's Black Book"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A significant new element has entered Israel's election campaign through the back door: Iran. In the past few days the prime minister was presented with a batch of documents dubbed "Terrorism's Black Book." The documents indicate that Iran has decided to carry out a series of attacks against Israeli targets abroad and in Israel with one clear aim in mind: to topple Peres' government and thereby paralyze the peace process. [passage omitted]

According to the documents submitted to Peres, the Islamic movements are not interested in strengthening the Israeli right wing because they support its positions, but in order to foil Peres' plan for an arrangement. First the Iranians adopted a policy of carrying out attacks against Israeli and Jewish targets abroad. A "martyrs fund" has been established to compensate the families of Palestinian terrorists.

On the basis of updated information, well-informed sources have determined that Iran is currently increasing its worldwide efforts by means of creating Islamic movements and encouraging them in almost every Middle East country (Sudan, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Turkey), in Europe (Bosnia) and Asia (the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia). The Iranian strategy is based on a methodical and long-term operation that starts out innocently — humanitarian activity, education, and welfare — and slowly turns into operational terrorist activity.

Recent reports indicate that Iran has prepared a "hit list" of leaders identified with the peace process and with rapprochement with Israel. The list includes, among others, Husayn and Mubarak. Warnings have also arrived from other sources regarding Iranian attempts to assassinate 'Arafat. [passage omitted]

It transpires that Iran has adopted a decision to do everything possible to topple Peres' government. The reason: Netanyahu will not adopt a similar attitude to Peres' regarding the withdrawal issue, therefore the Likud government will not be able to reach a peace agreement. Iran's orders are clear: to carry out attacks as close as possible to the date of the elections, preferably on election day itself. It is not clear how Israel intends to act against this order.

Israel: Peres on Jerusalem, Run-Up to Elections

TA2305134396 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (LEHAG supplement) in Hebrew 23 May 96 pp 5, 26

[Interview with Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres by Shim'on Schiffer; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Schiffer] Mr. Prime Minister, are there any real grounds for the increasingly

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

heated arguments within the context of the election campaign with regard to guaranteeing the indivisibility of Jerusalem?

[Peres] This is one of the greatest scandals in the current election campaign. If there is one issue over which the entire Israeli people is united it is the indivisibility of Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty. The Likud decided, for whatever reason, to make a profit from the issue of Jerusalem. There is no basis for this, neither historically nor factually. There has never been a more important issue on which the Labor Party was more united than on Jerusalem. Ben-Gurion made Jerusalem the capital of Israel in contravention of UN resolutions. The late Levi Eshkol headed the government which decided on the reunification of Jerusalem after the Six-Day War. Ya'aqov Shimshon Shapira, the former justice minister, took steps to apply Israeli law to both parts of the city. Moshe Dayan was the defense minister who ordered the liberation of the city. Yitzhaq Rabin was chief of staff during the Six-Day War, and Mordekhay Gur commanded the forces who fought in Jerusalem. Teddy Kollek was the builder of Jerusalem for over 25 years. All these people were from the Labor Party. What is all this idle chatter from the Likud? What has gotten into their heads?

[Schiffer] Were any talks held with the Palestinians, on your behalf, with regard to the nature of the permanent arrangement in Jerusalem?

[Peres] Perish the thought. The only thing we insisted upon in all the discussions preceding the Oslo agreements was that Jerusalem would not be included in the framework of Palestinian self-administration. We were as adamant on that then as we are now.

[Schiffer] What concept, therefore, are you guided by prior to the negotiations on the permanent arrangement on Jerusalem's status, especially with regard to those parts of the city that are densely populated by Palestinians?

[Peres] I am talking about an undivided Jerusalem in any case. We will not partition Jerusalem under any arrangement. Jerusalem was never an Arab capital. It was and will continue to be Israel's capital. The Palestinians will not get what they want in Jerusalem. The problem of Jerusalem's Palestinian neighborhoods will be resolved in a municipal framework, and this is something I do not care about. As for the holy sites, they will not constitute a problem. We will continue to guarantee free access to all religions. As far as I am concerned, Jerusalem is a closed case from the political aspect but will remain open to all religions.

[Schiffer] If you are elected prime minister, how do you intend to renew the peace process with Syria?

[Peres] First of all, we are free from any pressure relating to dates. There is no need to complete the negotiations in parallel with other arrangements. If the Syrians are prepared to accelerate the negotiations, we will speed up the talks. If they want to move slowly, we will take it slow. We do not intend to compromise on the main things: acceptable security arrangements, a full normalization in relations, and guarantees with regard to the water issue and the nonpollution of Lake Tiberias.

[Schiffer] What are you prepared to say with regard to the future of the Golan Heights?

[Peres] I am not prepared to declare anything. What good can come of that?

[Schiffer] Do you believe it possible to achieve an arrangement with Syria without giving back all of the Golan Heights?

[Peres] I doubt it. I doubt whether it is possible to reach a peace agreement with the Syrians without giving back all the Golan Heights. At any rate, we always said that we accept a territorial compromise on the Golan Heights.

[Schiffer] One of the major issues in this election campaign is that of individual security. Have you figured out a way to deal with the terrorist attacks while at the same time continuing the political process with the Palestinians?

[Peres] The solution to terrorism is mainly political in nature. The problem of terrorism can only be resolved in the framework of a political arrangement. Nevertheless, continued attempts to perpetrate terrorist attacks will accompany the peace negotiations with the Palestinians. This does not depend on the political negotiations.

[Schiffer] Recently there have been constant warnings about plans by Palestinian rejectionist groups to carry out terrorist attacks in Israel. What will happen to the political process if you are elected prime minister and the terrorist attacks resume?

[Peres] We will continue to fight terrorism, while at the same time promoting an arrangement. Most of the Palestinians support the political process and we must not permit an armed minority to hijack it. We must strike most forcefully at the perpetrators of terrorism. Although I have been called hesitant, when it was necessary we took all possible measures against the perpetrators of terrorism. We have recently had great success in eliminating those responsible for planning terrorist attacks against us.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

[Schiffer] In the past few weeks you fingered Iran as the country behind the attempts to topple the Israeli Government. Is this claim based on fact?

[Peres] Certainly. I know that Iran is behind the attempts to harm us in anticipation of the elections. They believe we will advance the peace process with our neighbors. Their aim is not personal, rather political. These very days — on the eve of the elections — they are showing a smiling face to Europe while pressuring Islamic Jihad and Hizballah to step up the attacks against us. Today Iran is ruled by an extremist group and there is no way to forge a dialogue with it.

[Tel Aviv MA'ARIV (HAG supplement) in Hebrew on 23 May 96 pages 2, 3, 4, and 17 includes a 2,000-word interview with Peres by Ben Kaspit and Sima Qadmon. Queried about the Iranian issue, Peres answers: "Iran is a lost case, just as Nazism was doomed to failure. It is a failure. My only fear is that before the Iranian regime collapses it will cause a disaster. However, it has no chance of winning. Stupidity has no future."

[Asked about the possibility of a preemptive Israeli strike, Peres says: "Let's put it this way: An international economic blockade is preferable to an Israeli military operation."

[Questioned about the problem of international cooperation against Iran, Peres responds: "Yesterday I had a very long talk with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl. He is determined not to allow this terrorism to run rampant. I do not want to go into details, but I believe they have started to realize what's happening here."]

[Schiffer] In its election campaign the Likud is using your pictures with 'Arafat, while your election ads have ignored 'Arafat.

[Peres] I do not know what you are talking about. We are holding contacts with 'Arafat and regard him as our partner. We are explaining this — we do not deny it and are not ashamed about it. The 'Arafat of 1996 is not the 'Arafat of 1986. He is a different man. He distanced the PLO from terrorism and is fighting terrorism himself. His intentions are crystal-clear. He is a man with whom we can negotiate, despite the fact that sometimes he supplies material to Beni Begin, who thrives by quoting him. I suggest that we do not listen to what 'Arafat says, rather see what he does.

Moreover, if the Likud says it supports the continuation of the peace process with the Palestinians, I want to ask them with whom precisely do they want to make peace? Whose hands will they shake? Conventional wisdom notwithstanding, negotiations are not about airing plans, but about finding a partner with whom you can work out an arrangement. 'Arafat is a partner to the arrangement in the territories.

[Schiffer] What will happen to the settlers in the territories? There are reports saying that Minister Beilin agreed with Rabbi Yo'el Bin-Nun that in the framework of the permanent arrangement most of the settlers will remain under Israeli control.

[Peres] This is true. Since most of the settlements are concentrated in certain areas of Judaea and Samaria, it will be possible to reach an agreement with the Palestinians.

I believe we will not have to evacuate most of the settlements. I am unwilling to draw a map and say what settlements we will evacuate. During the election campaign, however, I promised that any agreement with the Palestinians will be decided by a referendum. I am aware of the fact that in the negotiations with the Palestinians I will not be able to agree to things that will not be accepted by the majority of the Israeli public. The referendum is the guarantee for the outcome of the negotiations.

[Schiffer] Will the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment in Hebron be implemented after the elections?

[Peres] We are committed to our agreement with the Palestinians and will implement this part of the agreement as well.

[Schiffer] Economists believe that after the elections any government chosen will have to implement a series of steps to curb the enormous balance of payments deficit and continue the struggle against inflation. If elected, what moves do you intend to implement?

[Peres] To curb inflation it will be necessary to cut government spending. We will certainly have to tighten our belts. I promise that this will not be done by raising taxes. During my tenure as prime minister and finance minister I avoided raising taxes and creating more unemployment. A tax raise is also a violation of the citizens' trust.

I believe government spending can be cut in various ways. Various options have been presented to me and I will have to give them thorough consideration. I will deal with this, however, only after the elections.

[Schiffer] More than half a million Israelis today live below the poverty line — this is the situation at the end of your government's term. How do you feel about this situation?

[Peres] I feel that we must act to rectify this situation. We must create jobs. This government has done a lot in this respect: We created 400,000 new jobs. Today

This report may contain copyrighted material! Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

there is a shortage of workers in Israel. Unemployment went down from 11 percent to under 6 percent. Some 200,000 foreign workers are employed in Israel — an unprecedented number.

I think that in order to fight poverty we must raise salaries — and this is possible. What we have to do is modernize our industry. It is better for workers to receive higher salaries than welfare benefits and presents. The next government will methodically expand high-tech industries. Another way to tackle poverty is to give every Israeli youngster the opportunity for higher education.

[Schiffer] Who are your partners in the next government? Who will you turn to first, Meretz or the religious parties?

[Peres] All those agreeing with our basic guidelines will be potential partners in the next government. I want to emphasize that I will not delay the peace process for coalition purposes. I will not compromise on the significant issues that relate to the peace process.

[Schiffer] There is a feeling in the public that in the framework of courting the ultra-Orthodox parties you have already promised them funds and government portfolios.

[Peres] We promised nothing — neither myself nor anyone on my behalf. At the same time, in the housing sphere we have always thought it is necessary to solve the religious families' housing problem. This has to be done, and whether in the government or outside it, we will support a solution for the ultra-Orthodox community's housing needs. The religious sector has a real problem. They have many large families with a low income level. I have no intention of harming people just because they are religious.

[Schiffer] Can we expect any surprises in the makeup of your next government?

[Peres] This is a good idea. I really do not know. The last election campaign, however, taught me that before the picture is clear it is unwise to start forming a government. I am unwilling to deal with this now, rather only after the results of the elections are known.

[Schiffer] This is the first time that an Israeli prime minister is being elected under a new election system. Do you have any lessons at this stage?

[Peres] Not yet. The system will be tested only after the results are known. First we see what sort of political map is created after the elections; how the parties are distributed, and what problems are created. Usually there is logic in changing the election system after a certain period. After all, we are dealing here with human beings. Occasionally changes are advisable.

[Schiffer] Did you have any difficulties in marketing yourself?

[Peres] It was difficult because of one reason — because Yitzhaq [Rabin] was murdered. I replaced him. I had to deal with very difficult problems. These six months have been especially difficult. I do not think that I marketed myself in this election campaign. I did not try to make myself look alluring or pretty.

This election campaign was special, and I am speaking here as a seasoned politician. This time I encountered almost no signs of opposition. Certainly not hostility. All the grand declarations and confrontations on the streets have disappeared from the scene. Everybody was asking how I can make public appearances in the streets — but there were none to be made. One reason for this is television, seeing that everything took place in that medium. Another reason is that the public is in good shape, and it is hard to agitate people whose situation has never been better.

[Schiffer] You are refusing to say that this is your last election campaign. Why?

[Peres] I have a watch and a calendar. I consult the watch and the calendar, but I am under no obligation to state when I intend to resign. This issue is a matter for me to decide privately.

[Schiffer] What are your plans in case you are not elected prime minister?

[Peres] I do not intend to waste my time on this question. I have one week and the only thing that interests me is winning the election. What I am most interested in is explaining to the voters the basic difference between the Likud and us: We represent a movement that will advance peace in the region. Netanyahu represents a movement that will establish more settlements in the territories.

It makes no difference that the Likud candidate is speaking about peace. His coalition will resume the massive establishment of settlements in Judaea and Samaria. This will put an end to the peace process, to the Oslo process, and to Israel's economic boom. This is the root of the argument. What appears as a minor difference between us is actually a profound gap. We will continue the peace process while freezing the establishment of new settlements.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Israel: Netanyahu on Likud Stands, Run-Up to Elections

TA2305162496 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (LEHAG supplement) in Hebrew 23 May 96 pp 4, 26

[Interview with Israeli Likud Party Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu by Shim'on Schiffer; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Schiffer] Binyamin Netanyahu, is the recently revived electioneering debate regarding Jerusalem's unity based on fact?

[Netanyahu] Regrettably yes, because the current government is practically partitioning Jerusalem. PLO offices operate in East Jerusalem and Jibril al-Rujub's men control much of the city. Peres and his emissaries held secret talks with 'Arafat about dividing Jerusalem. No attempt to justify or ignore this will work. Mr. Peres is already practically partitioning Jerusalem. The coming elections are, first and foremost, about the future of Jerusalem.

[Schiffer] But Peres, in response, denies everything. He said that no talks have ever been held about the future of Jerusalem. On what is your claim based?

[Netanyahu] On firm proof. Peres' denials are as vacuous as his other past denials. He said there was no secret letter promising the PLO that its institutions in East Jerusalem would stay in place. When Beni Begin exposed the letter, Peres was forced to admit that he had deceived the public. We know for certain that talks were held between Beilin and PA [Palestinian Authority] representatives about the future of Jerusalem. The Oslo team has held such conversations in several European capitals and in Jerusalem. Let there be no doubt about this: Labor intends to establish a Palestinian state and its capital will be in Jerusalem.

[Schiffer] Peres said that the PLO activities in Orient House started during the days of the Likud government.

[Netanyahu] Orient House was closed by Likud Defense Minister Moshe Arens and, in any event, it did not operate as the Palestinian foreign ministry then. Over the past several years, other PA offices have moved in there. The attempts to conceal the facts and claim that Orient House is a mere community center are ridiculous.

[Schiffer] Will you close Orient House if you are elected prime minister?

[Netanyahu] I will shut it down immediately. The government I head will immediately expel al-Rujub's men from East Jerusalem. We will use every means at our disposal to guard our sovereignty over all parts of town.

[Schiffer] What will become of the East Jerusalem Arabs in the permanent arrangement?

[Netanyahu] We promise them equal rights. They will be allowed to vote for the city council. Peres' promises led to an escalation in the Arabs' demands. Now they are claiming rights to 40 percent of western Jerusalem, just as they demand the right to return to an endless number of settlements within the Green Line.

[Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew on 23 May carries a similar undated interview with Netanyahu by Mikhal Qafra and Nadav Ha'etzni on pages 5, 6, 7, and 17 of the LEHAG supplement. Speaking on the Palestinian issue, Netanyahu says: "My experience with the Arabs shows they are realistic. Today, they feel that they can have everything, or almost everything, so they make demands. We will offer them a fair and generous agreement that will be missing two spheres only — foreign affairs and security." Netanyahu goes on to say: "We are offering them individual rights." "We are offering a new model that addresses the issue of defining the self-determination problem. To begin with, it is not true that every minority should be given independence. This model is currently employed in an attempt to stabilize the international arena — not to double or triple the number of countries, but to give the entities full domestic freedom, but not political or military powers."]

[Schiffer] If you are elected prime minister, how will you restart the peace process with Syria?

[Netanyahu] The peace process with Syria is stuck. The process with the Palestinians is stuck too, and the peace with Jordan is eroding. I believe that a restart is needed to resume the process: The first step I intend to take immediately after I am elected prime minister is to call for the reconvening of the Madrid peace conference. Through the conference, we will reorganize the peace process. I have discussed this with Jordan's King Husayn and Prince Hasan.

At the conference, I will suggest employing several new channels through which to reduce the level of tension in the region, minimize the regional arms race, and find ways to supervise the introduction of certain weapons.

[Schiffer] Do you really believe that we can reach an arrangement with Syria without giving back the entire Golan Heights?

[Netanyahu] This was our stand when we went to Madrid, and even then they laughed at us and said that Syria would not show up — but it did. This government has a basic vision problem concerning Syria's stand. Mr. Peres assumed that Syria's main goal is regaining the Golan Heights. I disagree. I believe Syria wants the Golan, but its primary goal is maintaining 'Alawi rule.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

The key word is survival. Al-Asad wants the status of pan-Arab leader, good arrangements in Lebanon, and attaining the support of and tighter ties with the United States. Regaining the Golan is the last item on al-Asad's wish list.

The current government, seeking an arrangement at all cost, offered the entire Golan. Syria did not accept this, but Peres kept offering Syrian lookout posts in the Galilee. I believe that Syria is not ready for full normalization today because that might jeopardize its regime. No sane Israeli government should give away the Golan Heights, because it will be left with a piece of paper, but without peace. The Syrians will violate it at any given moment.

At the Madrid peace conference, I will suggest that we start negotiations with Syria on a series of agreements that would be good for both of us, on security-related issues.

[In the MA'ARIV interview, Netanyahu says: "I will be unequivocal: We will not get off the Golan Heights." "I am for starting nonterritorial negotiations that would be good for both sides. I intend to attain a series of agreements that may not include photo opportunities or big statements, but will normalize relations."

[MA'ARIV asks: "Are you saying that we volunteered to offer the Golan and pressed Syria to take it?" Netanyahu replies: "Okay, so they demanded it. We do not have to comply with every demand."]

[Schiffer] In your election campaign, you stress the partnership between Peres and 'Arafat. On the other hand, you say you accept the Oslo accords. Who will you implement them with, if not 'Arafat?

[Netanyahu] The Oslo accords established facts on the ground. I am forced to accept them as starting points. A government I lead will hold negotiations with the PA on a fair concept of peace. As for 'Arafat, it is not my heart's desire to meet him. I will meet him only if he meets all of his commitments to us and if Israel's interests require that I do so.

[Schiffer] Do you have a response to the recent terror attacks?

[Netanyahu] We may not have an absolute answer, and perhaps we are unable hermetically to prevent a lone terrorist from entering our territory, but we can definitely change the reality in which we live. Terror succeeded over the past four years because this government created safe havens for terrorists through the PA. We will change the rules of the game in this struggle.

[In the MA'ARIV interview, Netanyahu states he will not hold a referendum on the permanent arrangement with the Palestinians. Asked about keeping the agreement on the Hebron redeployment, he says: "Hebron is clearly different from the six towns already given to the PA." "We will discuss Hebron in the permanent arrangement." "I do not rule out the possibility of applying Palestinian self-rule to Hebron, but they will run their lives without dealing with foreign affairs and security. This is a careful process." Netanyahu states he does not trust 'Arafat to make decisions on security matters. "We will allow freedom of operation against terror everywhere it is needed," he says.

[Asked whether the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will enter PA areas, he says: "There are special units and military elements with which I am familiar. I will also take steps to rehabilitate the intelligence network in all the territories west of the Jordan River." "We have a right to demand that the Palestinians take real action. They have not met their promises." Asked how he will keep promises, Netanyahu says: "I have no intention to send the IDF back to Gaza, but there is a big difference between doing that and Peres' inaction. Their knowledge that we can operate there will deter them."]

[Schiffer] Will you enter Nabulus and Gaza?

[Netanyahu] We certainly will. This is one of the basic differences between us and Mr. Peres. The latter relies on 'Arafat to fight terrorism for him, while I trust only the IDF. If 'Arafat fights terrorism in the area under his control, we will not operate there. If he does not implement the necessary steps, we will not tie the hands of the IDF and the security forces. I intend to give the IDF and its officers freedom of action everywhere.

[Schiffer] Do you share intelligence sources' assessments that Iran wants to topple Peres' government in order to foil the peace process?

[Netanyahu] I hear these things and I must say that they reek of partisan interests. The worst thing here is that this is being said by senior IDF officers. Altogether there was one report by the intelligence sources about such an intention. This week I read in the papers that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] declared in Gaza that it is recommending to halt the terror attacks against Israel until the elections are over. What can you learn from this?

Iran and the extremist Islamic movements are interested in Israel's annihilation regardless of who is in control there. They do not care at all about this issue.

[Schiffer] Peres says the disagreement with you basically revolves around the issue of the settlements. If

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

elected prime minister, do you plan a new settlement wave?

[Netanyahu] We plan to strengthen and cultivate the settlements in Judaea and Samaria. We will do this in the open area and the Jordan Valley. We will discuss the scope of the new settlements in the framework of the next government.

We will use market forces, we will free state-owned land, and most of the investments for the settlements will come from the private sector. We will invest in the settlements less than the present government has transferred to the PLO — namely, 1.3 billion shekels a year.

In any case, we oppose the establishment of a Palestinian state. If established, such a state will forge military alliances with Iraq and Iran. A Palestinian state will threaten Jordan. It will be able to bring in millions of refugees who will be positioned along the Green Line.

[Schiffer] Are you hearing what you are saying? The truth is, however, that there is no territorial continuity between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and the Palestinian Authority's dependence on Israel is absolute.

[Netanyahu] I am not trying to create panic, but Mr. Peres has agreed to hand over to 'Arafat the territories after only cosmetic changes have been made.

[Schiffer] There is a feeling in the public that in the courting of the ultra-Orthodox parties you have already promised them funds and government portfolios.

[Netanyahu] We are maintaining a dialogue with the religious parties, but nothing has been decided. One has to admit that this public has faced great difficulties over the past few years. Their housing problems are especially difficult. This public wants to learn how we plan to solve this problem, and rightly so. I promised none of them the construction portfolio, however.

The religious public backs me not because I am a religious man or because I support a halakic state. I have made it absolutely clear to them that I will maintain the status quo between religious and secular Jews — and they believe me. At the same time they realize that over the past few years the government has become more and more Meretz-oriented, and they are greatly concerned about this fact. They want a prime minister who will represent the entire public and will not ignore the religious public.

[Schiffer] Are you preparing any surprises for the last days of the election campaign? Will you state who is your candidate for the defense portfolio?

[Netanyahu] I will not. At the same time I can tell you that many surprises are possible. I am considering a series of steps. We must bear in mind, at the same time, that this election campaign will not be won by surprises or last-minute tricks. The victor will be the one who manages to convince the public by appealing directly to the voters. Mr. Peres is refusing to hold a dialogue with me. This is regrettable, because then I could have asked him several questions and would have answered his own questions. Returning to the surprises: I am considering various people for the defense post, some of whom have already been mentioned. I will divulge my intentions, however, only after the elections.

[Schiffer] What about the possibility of a national unity government under your leadership?

[Netanyahu] I read about this for the first time in your newspaper. I do not believe that we can find common ground for a joint government with Labor, judging by its platform. I plan to appeal to our natural partners and establish a government with them. Only later will I turn to Labor — and if it wants to join on the basis of our basic guidelines, we will give this positive consideration.

[Schiffer] You are depicted in Labor's election ads as a man with a serious credibility problem.

[Netanyahu] This is a clear indication of the fact that Labor is in trouble — otherwise they would have avoided personal recriminations. I am extremely proud of my military, economic, and political record. I am coming to the job with a wide array of skills. I have a record that would not shame any prime minister. Mr. Peres, with all his experience, in the past four years brought bad things onto Israel. The security situation has collapsed, the national balance of payments deficit has increased, and inflation has reached double digits. The gap between the rich and the poor in Israel is the largest in the West.

[Schiffer] What economic moves will you implement if elected?

[Netanyahu] I can only repeat what an American presidential candidate said in the past: Read my lips — I will not raise taxes. On the contrary, I will reduce taxes. We will carry out a massive reduction in the state budget. We will expand business activity by means of a massive privatization of government companies. We will mercilessly cut through bureaucracy, and we will free state-owned land to reduce the cost of housing.

With the funds we get in exchange for the privatization of companies and land sales we will cover the expected deficits from the economic policy in its first two years of implementation.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

[Schiffer] Some people say you will be the first victim of the new voting system that you have so ardently supported.

[Netanyahu] I supported and continue to support it. I do not believe Israel can enter the 21st century under the present political system. It is impossible to carry out privatization when you are totally dependent on a coalition. The old system resulted in blackmail and paralysis.

[Schiffer] What do you plan to do if you are not elected prime minister?

[Netanyahu] I do not deal with this question. Not that it does not creep up occasionally late at night, but I do not deal with questions that do not require immediate solution. I am totally engrossed in the struggle that will land us victory in the elections.

[Schiffer] What do you wish for the other candidate?

[Netanyahu] I wish him many years of good health — and if he is interested, many successful years in the opposition.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Lebanon: Al-Hirawi States Views on Monitoring Group, Elections

NC2305125596 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi today received a delegation from the Editors Association Council led by Association head Milhim Karam. During the one-hour meeting President al-Hirawi expressed satisfaction that the Israeli aggression did not achieve its objectives. On the contrary, it consolidated unity and solidarity among citizens. He supported and blessed the resistance until the occupation is eliminated. He said: We will not use Qana as a slogan to shed tears and beg for foreign aid.

On the cease-fire monitoring group, President al-Hirawi said: We want it to have a military character with the right to move freely and to take immediate action. Giving it a political character will water down UN Security Council Resolution 425. He said peace is not farfetched. He added: We will not submit to any tempting proposal. A peace agreement is not between leaders, but between nations. The example of the Egyptian and Israeli peoples is before us. We support a just peace.

On the parliamentary elections President al-Hirawi said they will be held according to the law. He noted that neither his sons nor his close friends will run as candidates in these elections. He noted that any Cabinet change has rules. The ball is not in the president's court, but in parliament's court.

Lebanon: Resistance Claims Responsibility for Explosive Charge

NC2305123296 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Resistance [Hizballah's military arm] has annouced that this morning one of its groups detonated an explosive device on the Kurum al-Arz-Jazzin road as a Lahd [South Lebanese Army] patrol passed. The Islamic Resistance noted that the patrol suffered some casualties.

Lebanon: Israeli Bomb Explodes, Kills Citizen

NC2305173596 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] An Israeli incendiary bomb exploded in Shaqra town at 1400 [1100 GMT] today, killing citizen Anisa Hawi. Her body was transfered to Tibnin government hospital.

Lebanon: Suspected Bomber Extradited to Germany

NC2305121396 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Lebanon today extradited to Germany Yasir Muhammad al-Shuraydi, who is accused of bombing the La Belle Discotheque in Berlin [in 1986].

Al-Shuraydi left Beirut on board MEA flight 245 escorted by a joint Lebanese-German security team. Journalists were not allowed to approach him.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Syria: Memo Rejecting Terrorism to UN Session in Geneva Reported

JN2405063496 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Vienna — Syria asserted its rejection and condemnation of terrorism that seeks to achieve criminal purposes, saying it will not allow any party to practice terrorism from its territory. In a memorandum delivered by Ambassador Dr. Riyad al-Si'i to the fifth session of the Committee on Prevention of Crime and Criminal Justice, currently held at the UN headquarters in Geneva, Syria said terrorism, in all its forms and whatever its source, is a departure from international legitimacy and a threat to humanity and all nations.

The memorandum stressed that Syria's opinions and views should be taken into consideration in any discussion, resolution, or declaration. The memorandum highlighted the need to set specific and agreed-upon international standards to clearly make a distinction between terrorism and legitimate struggle for national independence, in accordance with the UN General Assembly Resolution No. 24/59 issued in 1987.

Syria: U.S. Middle East Policy, Relations With Arabs Viewed

JN2305104196 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0455 GMT 23 May 96

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an editorial headlined "The U.S. Role, the Yilmaz Government, and the Erroneous Bets," the newspaper AL-BA'TH comments on the history of the U.S. stand toward the Middle East.

AL-BA'TH discusses the U.S. Administration's stands during and after the Cold War and how these stands changed in the wake of the stormy developments and the collapse of the Soviet Union. It says: After the socialist bloc collapsed, the United States emerged as the only world power. The United States, which used to see the world from one angle, now sees it from a wider perspective.

AL-BA'TH points out that U.S. policy changed to some extent. U.S. President George Bush's initiative and the Madrid conference provided assurances on Washington's honest mediation to help the peace process succeed.

AL-BA'TH says: The U.S. Administration used to reiterate its neutrality, honesty, and concern for the objective of a just and comprehensive peace. Every time Israel obstructed the peace talks, Syria responded to the U.S. calls for another chance.

AL-BA'TH says: A person cannot be fair when he hears some of the U.S. statements in support of Israel if he does not realize that this return to total and open bias toward Israel clearly conflicts with President Bill Clinton's repeated assurances on commitment to the peace process, its agreed-upon objectives, the honest U.S. role, and the concern for a comprehensive peace.

AL-BA'TH warns against attempts to harm any improvement in relations between the United States and the Arabs, including Syria. It wonders: Is it in Washington's interest that some known parties want to put U.S. interests at the service of the Israeli election campaign? Are some of these sides allowed — on the pretext of helping Shim'on Peres whose hands are stained with the blood of the Qana massacre victims — to harm relations between the United States and all the Arabs?

AL-BA'TH discusses the Arabs' firm desire to improve relations with the United States in accordance with clear principles that safeguard dignity and independence and pave the way for a just and comprehensive peace. This is not helped by the ongoing attempts to place the United States in confrontation with the Arabs and their national and pan-Arab aspirations. Washington is being pushed into supporting some suspect moves in the region, beginning with Israel's aggressive policy and ending with the recent trends in Turkish policy.

AL-BA'TH concludes: We do not believe that this policy or some sides' encouragement of it serve the peace process and regional stability. This policy harms the role of the United States as a peace cosponsor and indicates that it is very possible to turn back the clock on Arab-U.S. relations, returning the region to the whirlpool of wars, conflicts, tension, and the loss of the chance for true peace, security, and stability for any party. This certainly does not serve U.S. interests or those of the people of the region.

Syria: Radio Urges U.S. To Restore 'Credibility' to Its Peace Role

JN2305140696 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1135 GMT 23 May 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear listeners: Syria's seriousness in its efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive peace is no longer doubted by anybody who has followed the long peace process since its beginning in Madrid. Moreover, Syria's choice of peace as a strategic option is no longer a secret to anyone. It is a choice translated by a true desire and a clear response to efforts exerted to achieve the objective of the peace process in accordance with the principles and bases of peace that

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

were drafted in Madrid based on the land-for-peace principle.

The world is now convinced about the Syrian stand, which proved Syria's credibility on the ground. At the same time, the world is aware of the Israeli stand, which rejects a just and comprehensive peace and evades its bases and requirements. This has caused a stalemate in the peace process and has brought it to a stage close to complete collapse.

Israel practically aborted all efforts exerted during several rounds of talks and planted mines and traps on the road to achieving real progress. Israeli officials did not stop using methods of deception and making false statements about their stand, which is hostile to a just and comprehensive peace.

It is regrettable that the United States, which played the role of a main sponsor of the peace process and was before then the sponsor of the initiative that launched this process, did not manage to force Israel to comply with the requirements of peace, its objective conditions, and its clear bases represented by UN Security Council resolutions.

As the world witnesses all this Israeli behavior, which is open to all possibilities and could cause the region to explode at any moment, the world is required more than ever before to intensify its efforts to end Israel's haughtiness and the arrogance of its officials and generals and to work on reviving the peace process in accordance with its well-known bases drafted at the Madrid conference. This requires the U.S. Administration to take the initiative to restore its credibility as an honest and active partner that has the ability to pressure Israel to comply with international legitimacy resolutions and the requirements of a just and comprehensive peace — one that restores land and rights to its owners and builds the requirements of security and stability in the region to serve its peoples and those of the world.

Syria: Paper Criticizes Peres Statements on Peace 'Maneuver'

JN2405103796 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0450 GMT 24 May 96

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an article today, AL-THAWRAH comments on statements by Israeli government and opposition officials, primarily Peres, Baraq, and Netanyahu, which are very spiteful toward peace. Having caused a deadlock in the peace process by making contradictory statements that aim at provocation, procrastination, and obstruction, the Israelis are once again talking about the depth of withdrawal from the Golan, partial and phased withdrawal from it, and adherence to occupation and settlements. The Israelis say any step with Syria will be put to a referendum. They also talk about upgrading the level of the talks, control of water resources, and impossible and unreasonable security arrangements. The Israelis are still using methods of maneuvering and deception, which can only be viewed as more obstacles to evade the requirements of peace.

AL-THAWRAH says the current Israeli maneuvers and other actions are in line with the general and vague expressions used by Peres when he first assumed office and posed as a peace advocate. However, these expressions were defeated by the aggressive practices and antipeace actions committed by Israel. The upshot was that Israel rejects peace. This was the position of Shamir and Rabin and now Peres.

The paper adds: The truth is that whoever is in power, Israel is the same aggressive and expansionist entity. There is no difference here between the Labor and the Likud. Both are working to achieve Israel's ambitions in occupation and expansion and both reject the principles of peace. Israel shall remain so until it proves otherwise.

AL-THAWRAH asks the sponsors of the peace process, especially the United States, to adopt a fresh and firm stand that is compatible with its role as a full and honest partner in the peace talks, to force Israel to adhere to the rules of peace and declare its frank commitment to the principles of peace and to its implementation.

The paper concludes: Peace is one concept. It has its correct and constant principles and foundations. It does not allow for the interpretations and arguments Israel is trying to raise to circumvent its familiar foundations that are stipulated in UN resolutions. The one who wants peace should make a clear and specific commitment to these foundations. Syria has done this and will never accept anything short of this, under any form and whatever the circumstances.

In another commentary, AL-THAWRAH says: The card of Shim'on Peres' destructive and mad war against Lebanon was defeated politically and militarily. Therefore, he is once again playing the tune of peace and talking about the need for progress in the peace process. Peres, however, continues to use the war and aggression machine as a means of pressure, blackmail, and intimidation to dictate Israel's concepts and conditions.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Peres has followed in the footsteps of Rabin and Shamir. He used a policy of maneuvering and procrastination and used U.S. support to continue to evade the obligations of a just and comprehensive settlement. Peres also sought to prolong the

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

duration of the talks on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks and to make the talks an end, and not a means to achieve peace and end the conflict. Israeli policy has been exposed. It failed the test of peace. By talking once again about peace, Peres is trying to enhance his image and position to win the Israeli elections and remain in power in the face of the Likud. At the same time, Peres has not quit his intransigent stands, familiar no's, and military terrorism.

AL-THAWRAH highlights the attempts at procrastination, saying that playing the card of peace — while the blood of children in al-Nabatiyah and Qana has not yet dried and while the images of savage destruction of dozens of villages and towns in southern Lebanon are still fresh — is nothing more than a maneuver and a lie that can no longer fool anyone. It is also an exposed charade that can no longer deceive public opinion. Those organizing this charade cannot produce evidence of their credibility and desire to make this region enjoy security, stability, and peace.

The paper concludes: The international community should act quickly to save the peace process before it is too late by forcing Israel to adhere to Security Council resolutions. This is the only way and real key to peace in the region.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Hezb-e Eslami Faction Stays in High Coordination Council

LD2305172996 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Esteemed Homayun Jarir, Hezb-e Eslami's [Islamic Party] representative in the High Coordination Council, has said that the Hezb-e Eslami of Afghanistan can both cooperate with the government in political administration and also retain its membership in the High Coordination Council.

Esteemed Jarir added: At the recent session of the High Coordination Council held in Mazar-e Sharif, a number of decisions were made that, from the viewpoint of political contents, are new in the country's history. He added: The session decided that the Hezb-e Eslami can both take part with the government in political affairs and also retain its membership in the High Coordination Council. He added: The Council's members said that the Hezb-e Eslami was to follow and to strengthen the peace process with the government.

Afghanistan: Opposition Group Expels 37 Members From Central Council

LD2305190196 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami of Afghanistan has expelled 37 members from its central council on charges of treason.

According to reports received by the Radio Message of Freedom from Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami sources, at the recent Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami's central council session, chaired by 'Abdol Karim Khalili, the group decided to expel 37 members from their membership on charges of treason against the body and collaboration with the enemies.

According to another report, the Wahdat-e Eslami [Islamic Unity Party] sources have denied a report on an agreement between the party and the Taleban group. The source said that talks are continuing between the two sides on finding the murderer of Ustad [professor] martyred Mazari [ex-leader of Hezb-e Wahdat, killed by the Taleban group].

Afghanistan: Hezb-e Eslami Denies Losing District in Lowgar Province

LD2305185396 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A claim alleging that Azraw District, Lowgar Province, has been taken by the Taleban group is unfounded.

This point was made during an interview with the Radio Message of Freedom by Zardad Khan Faryadi, commander of a Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] hit regiment and the person in charge of military affairs of the Ahmadzai tribe's jehadi council.

He said: The Hezb-e Eslami's forces are still stationed in Azraw District, Lowgar Province. This district is controlled by the local council and the forces of the Hezb-e Eslami. We would not allow anyone to force their way into this district.

In reply to a question by a Radio Message of Freedom correspondent, esteemed Faryadi said: The district's council has decided that if any group attempts to enter this district by force, the move will be stopped by collective resistance. He added: If a central government is set up in Kabul, we will declare our support for this government.

In reply to another question, esteemed Zardadi said: We are proud of the talks between the Hezb-e Eslami and Jam'iyat-e Eslami [Islamic Society]. This is a praiseworthy action that can resolve Afghanistan's crisis. The Ahmadzai's council are fully backing the above talks.

In dismissing a report on defection of commander Qalam, member of Ahmadzai's jehadi council, to the Taleban group, esteemed Zardad said: Commander Qalam is still a member of Ahmadzai's jehadi council, and the report on his defection to the Taleban group is propaganda by the enemies.

Afghanistan: Kabul Military Sources Claim 70 Taleban Killed in Fighting

LD2305173296 Tehran IRNA in English 1303 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, May 23, IRNA — In armed conflicts between Afghan government forces and the opposition Taleban militia in Band-e Ghazi and Mes-Eynak regions, some 70 Taleban forces have been killed or wounded, official military sources said here on Thursday. According to the Afghan Defense Ministry, during conflicts on Wednesday, the government forces along with their allied factions managed to recapture some parts of the regions from Taleban.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

The sources also noted that government warplanes in four sorties dropped bombs on Taleban positions in the southeast of Kabul, destroying parts of the latter's military hardware and strongholds.

According to official sources, the situation in the northern parts of Lowgar province which were the scene of fierce fighting on Wednesday, has subsided.

In the meantime, sporadic fights have erupted between the two sides since this morning in southern and southwestern suburbs of the capital. No immediate report has been available on casualties or extent of damage incurred by the belligerent parties.

Afghanistan: Commentary Asks Germany Not To Disrupt Relations

LD2305195196 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 23 May 96

[Political commentary]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Since the appearance of the suspicious Taleban group on the country's military and political scene, the city of Kandahar has become a center for the impermissible diplomatic and espionage activities of the countries in the region, some European states and others.

The main declared aims of this mercenary group were to eliminate all the mojahedin and to destroy all jehadi installations and even to execute all jehadi leaders. These slogans were warmly welcomed by the world's arrogant sources. It was for that reason that the Western and American mass media embarked on extensive propaganda for the benefit of this strange creature and have indicated that the Taleban group alone can restore security in Afghanistan.

The appearance of the Taleban group on the scene coincided with a warning statement from NATO saying that Islamic fundamentalism was the most serious danger to the world and to American and Western interests since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the dismantling of the Warsaw military pact.

It should be also mentioned that some of the jehadi parties at first committed serious mistakes and overtly and covertly supported the so-called Taleban group in order to defeat its rival group.

Past experience indicated that some groups claimed to be jehadi groups, whereas in fact they were controlled by aliens, and they expressed their solidarity with the Taleban group on the instruction of the enemies of Islam.

German sources now say that a high-ranking delegation of the so-called Taleban group have arrived in Hamburg, one of the German cities. The delegation is due to hold talks with the German authorities and with some Afghan groups.

It has been reported that an unknown person called Mowlawi Saheb of Badakhshan, Mullah Mohammad Ghows, and Engineer Mohammad Khan — or as he is generally called, Mullah Engineer Mohammad Khan Akhond — are among the members of this delegation.

The aim of this visit, according to the Taleban sources, is to consult with the Afghan refugees in Germany and to hold talks with the German authorities. These sources have also admitted that delegations representing the embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Islamabad have visited Kandahar several times and invited the so-called Taleban group to send a delegation to Germany.

The Western world and the American position vis-a-vis the world of Islam and against the world's Islamic parties is very clear to all. One cannot deny the fact that the only solid force in the Islamic world is the militant Muslims, who alone are trying to defend the legitimacy and independence of the Muslims and are not allowing the plunderers to loot the enormous natural wealth of the Islamic countries.

Now the question is: what is the German Government's interest in the so-called Taleban group?

If we pay attention to the NATO position, this organization clearly emphasizes that Islamic fundamentalism is a major threat to Western and American interests. Islamic fundamentalism to Europeans and American means a stubborn defense of Islam and Muslims' interests against modern tyrants. If the so-called Taleban group is a defender of Islam and Muslims, how can this group attract the sympathy and support of the world's arrogance?

We do not know which Muslim Afghans living in Germany have invited the so-called Taleban group to come to Germany and, allegedly, hold talks with them. [passage omitted]

Regarding the report that the so-called Taleban group is due to hold talks with the German authorities, we must say that the Germans from the beginning have had good relations with Afghanistan. They should not disrupt their good traditional relations with the Muslim people of Afghanistan as a whole by such unproductive dealings.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

The Muslim people of Afghanistan expects all states, regional and world governments to let Afghans resolve their problems by talks and understanding.

The German Government should remember and should never forget its debt. It was because of the blood of thousands of Afghans and the unprecedented heroism of the Afghan mojahedin that the reunification of Germany was realized and the evil wall of Berlin, dividing the German nation, was dismantled.

The German Government should have been a mediator between the very mojahedin who as a result of their bravery and unprecedented devotion prepared the ground for the territorial integrity of Germany and saved the world from the fearful monster of communism and expansionist, savage Russians.

We are fully confident that today or tomorrow, the internal divisions between the mojahedin will be resolved. The future government and Islamic state of Afghanistan and the people of Afghanistan, as a whole, will assess and judge the current stand and action of the governments and states vis-a-vis the sacred cause of Afghanistan's jehad and the country's events. The Afghan nation will express an opinion on the action of the enemies of Islam and the Jehad.

This is the end of our political commentary.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Tanks Leaving Presidential Palace for Barracks

BK2405051396 Hong Kong AFP in English 0453 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DHAKA, May 24 (AFP) — A dozen tanks left Bangabhaban presidential palace in central Dhaka for their barracks Friday, four days after taking up position to counter any attack by rebellious troops, officials said.

Dhaka residents — possibly getting accustomed to a life of uncertainty — ignored the movement as the tanks roared out of the palace, the residence of President Abdur Rahman Biswas, and headed back to Savar district, near the capital and home of the powerful Nine division.

The defence ministry said in a statement that tanks deployed in the city would return to their barracks with "the restoration of complete normalcy following the recent incidents."

Defence sources said all rebel officers and troops had been neutralised.

However, witnesses said a large number of tanks were stationed in and around Dhaka Cantonment barracks, where troops were still bunkered in amid continuing tension in the army's lower ranks following Monday's [words indistinct] revolt against Biswas.

Troops also moved out of state-run television and radio stations after staff expressed their annoyance at their presence, which they said was hampering their work. A Dhaka daily Thursday reported troops stationed there were also pre-checking programmes scheduled for broadcast.

Caretaker government chief Muhammad Habibur Rahman was informed of the situation and he quickly urged Biswas to withdraw troops from the two centres, official sources said.

The rebel leader and sacked army chief, Lieutenant General Abu Saleh Muhammad Nasim, was in "protective custody" along with two other generals and a dozen more officers at the Dhaka Cantonment military guest house, guarded by tanks and troops, the sources said.

Bangladesh: Wajed Questions Army's Neutrality's During Elections

BK2405005896 Hong Kong AFP in English 1243 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dhaka, May 23 (AFP) — The chief of the Awami League party, Sheikh Hasina Wajed, warned Thursday that the country was in a "grave crisis" and questioned the military's neutrality during polls if it remained under the president's control.

"The country has been pushed into a grave crisis by the president's action on military matters just days before the elections ... and has created a dangerous situation," she told reporters at a crowded press conference.

Wajed questioned the army's neutrality during the June 12 elections under the command of what she believes is a partisan president.

"You can understand (what will happen) if the army remains under President Abdur Rahman Biswas ...," she said, adding, "the caretaker government and the election commission should decide if they should be deployed or not."

The Awami League chief was speaking at her first press conference since Monday's abortive rebellion led by sacked army chief Lieutenant General Abu Saleh Muhammad Nasim against Biswas.

Nasim and other Bangladeshi army officers accused of leading the revolt will face a military inquiry by next week, the state-owned Dainik Bangla newspaper said Thursday.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

"Nasim and his troops could also face a full court-martial following the partial military revolt this week against the government, according to military regulations.

"I am reiterating my demand that the defence ministry and all executive powers be immediately handed over" to caretaker government chief Muhammad Habibur Rahman, she said. Wajed refused to comment on whether she would withdraw from the electoral race if her demands were not met, responding only with a cryptic "time will tell".

Wajed also accused the president of trying to create "indiscipline and division" among the armed forces and said she was worried that he could again intervene to foil the elections if the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) headed towards a defeat in the fray.

"He has worked as a party man, stigmatized the presidency ... and his actions tantamount to a rejection of the basis to a caretaker government," she said.

Biswas is a senior member of former prime minister Khaleda Zia's BNP.

Opposition groups led by Wajed forced Zia to resign in March after a two-year campaign in favour of a caretaker government, through a constitutional amendment that also left the critical defence portfolio with Biswas for the interim period.

Strong military contingents are still guarding the state radio and television centres, while tanks were placed in and around the Dhaka Cantonment military barracks, witnesses said.

The mass circulation Ittefaq daily said several officers were in the television station in Dhaka pre-checking broadcasts. No independent confirmation was available.

People were apprehensive Thursday as tension remained high in the military rank-and-file following the abortive revolt Monday, analysts said.

Biswas dismissed Nasim on Monday after he refused to order two senior army officers to retire. Nasim's apparent refusal to follow the order sparked the revolt and an accusation by Biswas that the army chief had ordered troops to march to Dhaka.

Bangladesh: Awami League Chief Criticizes BNP Over President's Power

BK2405004196 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1500 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina has called upon the people to vote her party's candidates for the socioeconomic development of the country under her party's 21-point program. Addressing a crowded news conference in Dhaka today, she said that her party does not believe in false promises and fulfills the pledges it makes to the nation.

The Awami League chief criticized the Bangladesh Nationalist Party [BNP] for retaining the Defense Ministry with the president and BNP's failure in securing a fair share of the Ganges river water. Hasina said that if voted to power, her party will ensure a fair share of the Ganges river water for the country.

India

India: President Sharma Addresses Parliament

BK2405092396 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in Hindi 0531 GMT 24 May 96

[Address by Indian President Shankar Dayal Sharma outlining the new government's policy statement to a joint session of Parliament in New Delhi — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] Honorable members: It gives me great pleasure to address both houses of Parliament at this first session after the 11th general elections to the Lok Sabha. I extend my warm felicitations to the members of the new Lok Sabha. The just-concluded general elections demonstrated the country's democratic credentials. The nation and the world witnessed the majesty of the democratic process in India. The recent general elections were organized with efficiency and dispatch. Our people participated in large numbers and exercised their sovereign right to elect their representatives. Once again India has demonstrated the strong, vibrant, and enduring nature of our democratic ethos. The government will fully respect the people's mandate reflected in the election results. The current session of Parliament will ensure whether the Council of Ministers enjoys the confidence of Lok Sabha or not.

The country stands at the crossroads of history. As the century comes to a close and the millennium turns, our destiny as a strong and powerful nation beckons us. The government is conscious of our common responsibility to fulfill this historic task. Our endeavor should be to strive for a wholesome consensus on all vital national issues.

Among our primary tasks is to ensure the due honor, prestige, and strength of the states. These basic institutions, devised by the founding fathers of the nation with a view to providing good governance, must be strengthened. This may necessitate appropriate reforms in our polity and governance. Providing clean and efficient administration is the need of the hour. Probity and accountability must be the norms of public administration. Propriety, promptness, and effectiveness should

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

characterize every measure — administrative, legislative, or political. Deficiencies in our electoral process must be attended to. The matter has long been pending and we can ill afford any further delay. A large number of suggestions have been made from time to time. The necessary reforms must be taken up urgently on the basis of the wealth of material available and other means. The prime objectives should be to eliminate the use of money power in the electoral process, ensure the accountability of political parties, and remove unfair practices.

An in-depth review of our decision making process is another issue that requires immediate attention. The primary task is to reduce the scope of arbitrary decision making as much as possible by ensuring that our processes are made simpler and more transparent. To ensure the meaningful implementation of such a program, we must provide expeditious means for the speedy resolution of public grievances.

The government is committed to upholding the prestige and independence of the judiciary. A comprehensive examination of the work methods and environment, emoluments, and conditions of the subordinate judiciary is being undertaken by the first national judicial pay commission. The government will facilitate this work with a view to ensuring the speedy submission of its report. Every effort will be made to reduce the courts' backlog by spreading modern management techniques and expeditiously filling judicial vacancies.

The government is fully conscious of the need to improve the welfare of central government employees. The fifth pay commission is currently looking into their emoluments, structure, and service conditions. As the commission's final report is likely to take some time, the government has asked for interim recommendations as early as possible to provide appropriate relief to the employees.

The government has a deep and abiding commitment to freedom of the press and media. Due to their pervasive presence, the electronic media are acquiring increasing importance in our daily lives. The government is determined to free All India Radio and Doordarshan from government control by fully implementing the Indian Broadcasting Act of 1990. In 1995, the Supreme Court even directed the government to set up an independent authority to regulate the airwaves. The government will take all necessary steps to establish a truly autonomous Indian Broadcasting Corporation to strengthen national identity, integration, and credibility in the dissemination of information and the promotion of quality education and entertainment.

Our country's vastness, diversity, and underlying unity are its basic strengths. Indians are one people; one nation with a unique culture. The government will do all it can to ensure that harmonious relations are maintained among different communities and groups. The government is committed to providing security and protecting the lives and property of all people, particularly weaker sections and minorities.

Violence manifested in separatist, extremist, criminal, and antisocial activities has no place in any civilized society and will be dealt with effectively by the government. In so doing, the government cannot forget that political, social, and economic measures are equally necessary to resolve these problems. The northeastern region continues to suffer from violence, insurgency, and ethnic strife. There is a need to strengthen the security system and intelligence mechanism and prevent the inflow of foreign arms and terrorists from across the border. Illegal immigration creates unstable conditions and extensive measures have to be taken to prevent them. Effective administration for the acceleration of economic development and providing a prompt grievance redressal system are also urgent requirements.

Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India. We will not tolerate any type of interference in our internal affairs. We want to restore the democratic setup in this state. The right steps are being taken for this so that free and fair elections are held in the state. Along with this, efforts for socioeconomic progress in the various fields will also be intensified.

The government is anxious to improve center-state relations. The Sarkaria Commission report and other extensive studies provide ample material on the various facets of this problem. The government will ensure that there are increased consultations with the state governments and that there is no misuse of Article 356 of the Constitution. The role and status of the interstate council envisaged under Article 263 of the Constitution will be reviewed in depth and action will be taken to make it an effective mechanism to resolve disputes between states and for better coordination of policies and actions in matters of common interest to the states.

In order to fulfill the aspirations of the people of Uttaranchal and Vananchal, the government will take all necessary steps to give them full statehood. The various problems connected with granting full statehood to Delhi will also receive serious consideration.

Our vision of India's economy is one which enables India to achieve its destiny in the forefront of the nations of the world. We have an abiding faith in the creative genius of every Indian. Our task is to release the energies by eliminating outdated structures

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

of control and regulations and to reedify government in its new role of providing a supportive framework for free market operations for growth, while strengthening programs for poverty eradication and the building of social infrastructure. The economic reforms of the past five years did achieve some measure of success. The government will invigorate the growth impulses in the economy and control inflation by accelerating economic reform, providing much greater support and impetus to infrastructure development, and maintaining a sound framework of fiscal and monetary policies.

Today, high interest rates and scarce credit are inhibiting the growth of industry, trade, and agriculture. The root cause of the problem is the continued recourse to high levels of borrowing by government to meet its ever-expanding expenditures. The government will prune nondevelopment expenditures and accelerate tax reform to reduce the fiscal deficit and release resources for productive activities. The government will identify areas from which it needs to withdraw. In taxation, we will not only ensure that the levels and rates of taxation are such that growth is not constrained, but also that the burden is equally distributed among affluent sections of society. The government will devise a suitably structured value added tax. To deal with the massive overhang of past public debt and to ensure a higher asset return in public enterprises, the government will constitute a disinvestment commission to accelerate the process of disinvestment in a systematic and transparent manner. Part of the proceeds will be earmarked for repaying public debt and the balance to finance capital expenditures. Care will be taken while disinvesting to ensure that workers' interests are not harmed. The National Renewal Fund will be realigned toward retraining and developing workers as may be necessary in a fast-growing economy. Public savings will be increased and private savings stimulated to finance the much higher levels of national investment necessary to accelerate economic growth and eradicate poverty.

Foreign savings and investments will be welcomed to supplement national savings efforts. A country of India's size and potential can easily double the flow of direct foreign investment, especially in the critical infrastructure areas of power, roads, ports, and telecommunication.

The government will draw up an integrated time-bound program to increase capacity and remove bottlenecks posed by insufficient infrastructure in energy, especially power, coal, and petroleum; roads; ports; railways; and telecommunication.

The policy framework for inducing private, including foreign, investment will be revamped and made transparent. The government is committed to bring about long-pending reforms in corporate laws which will ensure their functioning as instruments of economic growth, rather than merely as regulatory mechanisms.

The laws must promote entrepreneurship and free industry from all avoidable inhibitions and disincentives. Necessary legislative action in this direction will be undertaken quickly.

The government fully recognizes the importance of the small-scale sector for production and employment in the economy. The difficulties faced by this sector will be carefully reviewed and obstacles to rapid growth eliminated.

The construction industry is one of our larger sectors, providing jobs to millions. A major constraint to growth in this sector has been the Urban Land Ceiling Act. The government will review the rationale of this act.

All this will be necessary to restore the competitive edge of our producers — large and small — so they can face the challenges of the international market effectively.

Export growth must be stepped up to meet the important needs of a more dynamic economy. For the short and medium term viability of our balance of payments, the government will pursue policies aimed at rapid and sustained export growth and attracting adequate inflows of non-debt creating capital. The government will review and simplify the foreign exchange control regime in line with the needs of a modernizing economy. To strengthen our financial and capital market, the government will provide for greater accountability and competition for public financial institutions, including banks. To promote healthy development and avoid scams and irregularities, the government will undertake a program to modernize the infrastructure of the capital market, including swift passage of viable legislation for depositors.

Three-quarters of our citizens live in rural India, and agriculture is the life blood of rural society. The rapid broad-based development of agriculture is vital for ameliorating rural poverty, ensuring self-sufficiency in food, strengthening the domestic market for industry and services, and building mutually beneficial links between agriculture and industry. The government will allocate more funds for rural infrastructure, ensure remunerative prices for farmers, free agro-based industries such as sugar from licensing controls, and strengthen the public distribution system in rural areas.

Optimal utilization of scarce water resources is critical for agricultural development. The government will give special priority to completing ongoing irrigation projects. Water is our most precious resource and its

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

conservation and effective utilization is of paramount importance. The government attaches high priority to watershed-based development, for drought prone areas, and wasteland reclamation through adequate technical support and public involvement.

The government will take suitable measures to ensure the protection of cows and impose a total ban on cow slaughter. [applause]

The government will frame policies aimed at the true empowerment of women to ensure that their dignity and rights are not violated and their full potential is realized. The government will take the necessary legislative and other steps to reserve 33 percent of the seats for women in all elected bodies, including state assemblies and Parliament. [applause]

The disabled and all those who are placed at a disadvantage for reasons beyond their control are primarily the responsibility of the state. Simultaneously, the trades and industry will be made to realize and fulfill their social obligations in this respect. Our senior citizens also deserve special care. The government will consider their problems and enact measures to make their lives easier in their old age.

The government is painfully aware of the grave problem of poverty in the country. The needs of the poorest sections of the country require the most urgent and sympathetic attention. We will strengthen programs that contribute substantially to their social and economic elevation. We will provide them with gainful employment and income-generating assets. In so doing, we will endeavor to ensure that the present disparities in the social and economic spheres are eliminated. Special attention will therefore be paid to the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, the backward classes; the other deprived sections of society; and the problems of bonded and child laborers. Poverty alleviation programs and other welfare measures for the weaker sections of society must be focused accurately on those who really need government support. The government will soon begin the process of identifying the 50 million poorest families for immediate relief. [applause]

The role of the state governments in implementing these programs is crucial and we will make an effort to give them the necessary flexibility and enlist their active support in the task of promoting greater economic and social justice. Growth cannot be measured in economic terms alone. The problems of poverty, disease, and hunger require a multidimensional approach. In fact, no improvement in the quality of life — the real index of growth — is possible without social inputs like education, health, and other welfare measures. The government will initiate a pioneering 10-year plan focused on providing nutrition, health care, and education facilities to the children of the poor so they are brought up to the same level as other children. Adequate resources for this plan will be made available.

The government attaches a high priority to education as an instrument for the material, physical, and spiritual development and enrichment of society and the individual. Today we see the old economic order based on competitive advantage of labor and resources giving way to a new order built on the foundations of human resources, skills, and technology. The changing economic scenario and rising social aspirations require significant modifications in our educational program. We have not yet been able to provide free elementary education to our children as enjoined by the Constitution. This requires urgent rectification. The government will encourage vocational and technical education. The government recognizes the need for special efforts to spread education among women. Vocational and technical education programs to enable them to qualify for suitable employment opportunities will receive emphasis. Higher education will be revamped to enable India to emerge as a major economic power in the international arena. In this sphere, the existing centers of excellence require strengthening. Similar centers are also needed in new areas.

We believe in increasing state investment in health and nutrition programs as this is essential for raising the quality of life of our people. Our goal will be health for all. Reduction in the infant mortality rate, immunization of children against killer diseases, and improvement of the primary health care system will be the cornerstones of this program. In this, we will make full use of ayurveda, unani, homeopathy, and other Indian systems of medicine.

The government will give due priority to population issues in the national agenda, especially family planning. Our long-term objective is to stabilize the population by the first decade of the next century. The government will devise a system of incentives and disincentives to encourage the adoption of family planning norms.

It is unfortunate that safe drinking water is still scare or unavailable in a large number of dwellings. There are 160,000 dwellings with no drinking water facilities and 140,000 dwellings where such water is badly contaminated. The government is committed to providing drinking water facilities to all our people in a time-bound manner. [applause]

We will consult with the state governments and extend the necessary support to them to achieve these goals. In areas where drinking water is chemically contaminated, available technology will be harnessed to make it safe

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

and drinkable. The government considers community participation in this program necessary and will take action to encourage it.

The government recognizes the important role that science and technology plays in transforming society. Steps will be taken to harness the latest advances in the service of the people. Special attention will be paid to the needs of rural areas.

Measures will be taken to see that national interests and intellectual property rights are adequately protected.

The government will continue to support the country's space program, which has demonstrated its high potential and utility for the overall development of the country.

Our foreign policy is governed by our national interests and reflects India's position as a major player in the world arena, responding to the possibilities and challenges of the post-Cold War situation and rejecting all forms of hegemonism or dominance. In this process, our political, economic, and security and other concerns will be pursued in a clear and unambiguous manner.

The government's foremost priority in foreign policy will be to improve relations with all our neighbors in South Asia, including Pakistan, bilaterally and in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation forum. We will foster mutually beneficial partnership with all countries.

We will strengthen our broad-based ties with Russia. We hope to further strengthen and diversify our relations with the United States. We will utilize the opportunities offered in India-China relations to enhance friendship and cooperation. In keeping with our commitment to have brotherly relations with Asian countries, we look forward to reinforcing our friendly relations with the ASEAN states. India's role in the multilateral field has always been correct and constructive.

Our policy on issues such as the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the fissile material cut-off treaty will be governed by our traditional commitment to a nuclear weapons free world. While our commitment to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy is well known, where necessary, in the light of our national interest, our nuclear policy will be reevaluated. [applause]

The situation in some parts of India's immediate neighborhood continues to be uncertain in security terms. It is regrettable that Pakistan continues to instigate terrorism against India. We urge Pakistan to respond constructively to our repeated efforts to resolve all outstanding issues bilaterally. There will be no compromise on our country's important security concerns.

A program of indigenous development of our defense capability in terms of research and acquisition will continue to be reinforced in the light of our security needs. We will stress a coordinated approach in national security by revitalizing the structure and enhancing the status of the National Security Council.

We repose our full confidence in the ability of the Indian armed forces to defend the nation and will do whatever is necessary to maintain and enhance this ability. I am sure the honorable members will join me in commending the armed forces for their professionalism and dedication. [applause]

Recognizing their invaluable contribution, the government is committed to taking all possible steps to promote their welfare. We cannot forget the large community of former servicemen. They have rendered valuable service to the nation and deserve special consideration. [applause]

The government will establish an Army Welfare Foundation with a suitable endowment to take care of their rehabilitation and welfare.

We are faced with a number of crucial challenges as we stand on the threshold of the next century. The 11th Lok Sabha will have the honor of contributing to the task of leading the country into the next century. My good wishes are with you in this historic task.

Hail India! [applause]

India: BJP, Congress Clash Over Sharma Reference to Cow Protection

BK2405114596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and Congress members today clashed in the Lok Sabha over the reference to cow protection in the president's speech. Immediately after obituary references made to the former members who died during the intersession period, Mr. P.R. Dasmunshi, Congress, said a wrong message has gone from the address to the international community on the issue and it is against the provisions of the Constitution. He was supported by his party members. However, the reference on cow slaughter was strongly supported by the BJP members, who resorted to slogan-raising in the house. The speaker, Mr. P.A. Sangma, ruled that the issue can be discussed during the motion of thanks to the president's address. The speaker later adjourned the house for the day.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

India: Vajpayee To Move Confidence Vote Motion on 27 May

BK2305155596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] An official motion on vote of confidence is to be moved in the Lok Sabha by the prime minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, on Monday [27 May]. This is understood to have been decided at a meeting of the leaders of various political parties and the groups convened by the speaker, Mr. P.A. Sangma. Some Congress leaders, after meeting the speaker, said the ruling party wanted more time for discussions and the voting to take place on Tuesday, while the opposition parties insisted that voting on the motion should take place on Monday itself.

India: Congress Asks MPs To Vote Against BJP Confidence Motion

BK2405044096 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, will move an official motion of vote of confidence in the Lok Sabha on Monday [27 May]. This is understood to have been decided at a meeting of leaders of various political parties and groups convened by the new Lok Sabha speaker, Mr. P.A. Sangma, yesterday. Some Congress men after the meeting with the speaker said that the ruling party wanted more time for discussion on the motion and the voting on it on Tuesday. They said the opposition parties however insisted that voting on the motion should take place on Monday itself. It may be recalled that Mr. Sangma disallowed the plea that the no-confidence motion against the Vajpayee ministry should be taken up first before the president's address today. The speaker held that no business of the house can be transacted before the president's address.

The Indian National Congress has issued a three-line whip to its MPs to be present and vote against the confidence motion being brought by the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] government on Monday. The constituents of the United Front have also decided to issue a three-line whip to its MPs to vote against the motion.

India: BJP Calls For 'Rethinking' by MP's Over Confidence Vote

BK2405122396 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1135 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] has expressed the hope that MP's [member of Parliament] will be guided by their understanding of the people's mandate and not by their parties' dictates during the crucial voting on the confidence motion next Tuesday. Briefing newsmen in the capital today, the party spokesman, Mr. Venkaiah Naidu, said there is still some scope for rethinking by MP's from regional parties over the issue of support to the United Front. He dismissed reports that the governent would recommend dissolution of the Lok Sabha, if it loses the confidence vote. The BJP parliamentary party is having a closed door meeting this evening to finalize the strategies to be adopted during the confidence motion.

India: Further on Kashmir Elections; Vajpayee Congratulates People

BK2305162696 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, about 40 percent voters exercised their franchise in elections to Baramula and Anantnag parliamentary constituencies today. The chief electoral officer, Mr. J.A. Khan, told newsmen in Srinagar this evening that Anantnag parliamentary constituency recorded a turnout of 43 percent and Baramula over 35 percent. Mr. Khan said voting remained by and large peaceful and no candidate has complained about any electoral malpractice. The highest percentage of polling has been reported from Uri assembly segment in Baramula where 65 percent electorate exercised their franchise. In Anantnag constituency, the highest 60 percent polling was at the Sangash assembly segment. A team of AIR correspondents who visited a number of polling booths in both the constituencies report that people wearing traditional dresses were seen in long queues waiting for their turn to vote. In the last parliamentary elections of 1989, only 5 percent polling had been recorded in Anantnag and Baramula constituencies. Now here is a report from our correspondent:

[Begin recording] The people of Kashmir have once again proved that they want peace to return to their beautiful state and they cannot be swayed by false propaganda launched by militants and Pakistan. Despite all the efforts made by Pakistan, voters fearlessly came out in Baramula and Anantnag constituencies to cast their votes and show their solidarity with India. This morning I visited some of the polling stations at Kupwara, especially a village Trehgam from where the militancy in Kashmir started and there all the voters with one voice denounced militancy and wished that a popular government is installed so that the rule of gun is over.

Undeterred by Pakistan's unsuccessful efforts by making some explosions in Tithwal area in Uri sector, the voters exercised their franchise with great enthusiasm. Surprisingly, 3,000 local employees came for election duty despite the threats by the militants; and the people

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

of both the constituencies ignored the hartal [strike] call given by the militants. The desire of the Kashmiris for peace is evident from the fact that there was no incident of violence, rigging, or booth capturing. This is Gurjeet Malik from Srinagar. [end recording]

Political observers say the massive turnout in the present round of elections is the mandate of the people for the return of peace and democracy in the valley. As reported, Jammu and Leh constituencies went to the polls on the 7th of this month. Polling in Srinagar and Udhampur constituencies will be held on the 30th.

Pakistani troops fired from across the border in Tithwal and Chhatta Uri sectors, but it caused no damage. Two explosions took place in Sopor town. No one was injured. An attempt to booth capturing at Sopor was foiled. Meanwhile, many of the Kashmiri migrants at Nagotra, Mishriwala, Purku, and Moti camps near Jammu exercised their right of franchise through postal ballot.

The prime minister has congratulated the people of Jammu and Kashmir for turning out in large numbers to elect their representatives from Baramula and Anantnag Lok Sabha constituencies. In a statement in New Delhi today, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee expressed happiness and said that the people have given a befitting reply to the forces which are bent upon thwarting the election process. He also congratulated the police, security forces and polling staff for making adequate arrangements for the peaceful conduct of polls. The prime minister said that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India. He added that his government is determined to give no opportunity to powers which want to deprive the people of their rightful democratic representation in the Lok Sabha. Mr. Vajpayee said that terrorism and violence will be dealt with sternly to enable the people of Jammu and Kashmir to fully enjoy their democratic rights and the fruits of development.

The election commissioners, Dr. M.S. Gill and Mr. G.V.G. Krishnamurthy, have expressed satisfaction over today's polling in the Kashmir Valley. They said the polling percentage this time was substantially higher than in the 1989 parliamentary elections in the two constituencies. Dr. Gill expressed the hope that the peaceful polling in the two phases will pave the way for holding assembly elections in the state. They said that the local government staff reported for duty at most of the places. Referring to migrant voters, the Election Commission has said that 6,444 ballot papers have been issued covering 46 percent of the total migrant electorates of Baramula constituency. For Anantnag, 9,545 ballot papers have been issued.

India: Western Media Allegations About Kashmir Elections Rejected

BK2305145896 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Center has strongly refuted certain allegations by the Western electronic media that security forces have induced people in Jammu and Kashmir to go to the polling booths. An official spokesman said in New Delhi today that some voters may be saying that they voted on being induced by the security forces only as an excuse or as a defense mechanism to ward off threats from militants. The spokesman said such information is given out as part of the propaganda angle of Pakistan and [All Parties] Hurriyat Conference. The spokesman said that the government wants to hold elections in a free and fair manner by providing people with a sense of security to participate in the polls.

India: Alert Sounded in Various States After Bomb Blasts

BK2405043596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A statewide alert has been sounded in Gujarat following the recent bomb blasts in Delhi and Rajasthan. The state police has warned the people against possible explosions in the state. It asked them to inform the police about any suspicious movements or things.

In Rajasthan, a statewide red alert follows a bomb blast in a passenger bus which claimed 14 lives. According to the police, security has been stepped up on all interstate routes and all vehicles passing through them are being checked.

The Haryana chief minister, Mr. Bansi Lal, also reviewed the law and order situation in the state. He directed the district-level authorities to monitor the situation and take preventive measures against antisocial elements.

In Calcutta also, all the police stations have been alerted following the recent blasts. A strict vigil is being maintained in the metropolis with regular patrolling. Police recovered 18 bombs from the hostel of the Calcutta Medical College Hospital yesterday.

In Uttar Pradesh, four persons, including a child, were injured in a powerful blast in Meerut city last night. Our Meerut correspondent reports that the blast occurred in a house in Shastri Nagar area. Two adjoining houses were also damaged.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

India: Pakistan Accused of Recent Bomb Blasts

BK2405121596 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 24 May 96

[Commentary by V. Sudarshan]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The explosions at Lajpatnagar Market in New Delhi and the one in the bus in Dausa, Rajasthan, less than 24 hours later merits serious consideration. Firstly, they are of a pattern which is familiar and they have together taken a heavy toll in human lives. The Delhi blast killed about 20 people and the Rajasthan about 15. Number of those injured and in danger of succumbing to wounds is substantially higher. The timing of the first explosion in Delhi and the second in Rajasthan is of some significance; 21 May is Rajiv Gandhi's death anniversary and is observed as antiterrorism day. The cynicism obviously guided the choice of the Lajpatnagar Market as the site for carrying out this deplorable and senseless act. It offers a soft target, the shoppers who thronged the place by the thousands being too defenseless against such a dastardly act aimed at one in particular. A bomb placed in a bus also often has similar spectacular results.

The first explosion was apparently timed just ahead of the elections to the Lok Sabha, the lower house of Indian parliament in Kashmir and was designed to be a disincentive both for voters in the valley and outside for the government of India. Militants have voiced their strong opposition to the exercise of holding Lok Sabha polls even previously. Those who claimed responsibility aiso said they were protesting the killing of Kashmiris. This claim bears some examination. On the first count, the efforts of the terrorists appear to have backfired as the polls are going ahead as scheduled. On the second, if a statistical analysis of the killing of Kashmiris were to be attempted, it will show conclusively that most of these killings are done by Pakistan-sponsored and trained terrorists who have a mandate dictated by their mentors across the border.

Analysts say that Lajpatnagar Market was chosen because, it is frequented by the Diaspora of Kashmiris but, it is too early to say if the voters will be swayed by such acts of meaningless aggression. By now, explosions of this nature have become more or less the standard stock in trade of terrorists who fan out from Kashmir in search of new ways to focus international attention on themselves. By now, it has become clear that the Kashmir who are routinely arrested in New Delhi come to the capital with a specific and destructive purpose. Clearly, they do not come to New Delhi to visit the Qutub Minar or the Red Fort. Two Kashmiri groups, which have claimed responsibility for the dastardly act at Delhi, Lashkar-i-Sajjad and the Jammu and Kashmir Islamic Front are hitherto unknown groups. The same would probably apply to the bus explosion at Rajasthan. After all, it is common knowledge that such groups report to Islamabad.

Moreover, the modus operandi has all the hallmarks of being planned and carried out with the assistance of the Pakistani intelligence agency, the Inter Service Intelligence — ISI. The Pakistani high commissioner in New Delhi who has forgotten that diplomacy is often about saying nothing after thinking twice has articulated himself forcefully against the conduct of polls in Kashmir. His predecessor had argued equally forcefully, but for the opposite reason. This contradiction in position shows up the Pakistani approach to Kashmir.

It is just as well that the White House has taken cognizance of the explosion and condemned it out of hand. The American approach to the phenomenon of terrorism that has engulfed the valley is noteworthy because of the near complete absence of even handedness. Till recently, the Americans even refused to acknowledge the possibility that Pakistan is funding militants and training them. Broadly, what Pakistan is doing would amount to export of terrorism, something that has to be actively discouraged. But, the American strategical imperatives are so fashioned that the White House can afford to turn a blind eye to patently hostile actions emanating from Islamabad. This being the case, it would call for a greater international coordination to ensure that Pakistan takes a more a civilized approach to its neighbors. Otherwise, guarding against such eventualities becomes much more difficult. For, it is worth considering the fact that for every militant arrested, Pakistan is training a dozen more.

India: Report Views Progress of MiG-21 Upgrade Plan

BK2305154896 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 23 May 96 p 12

[Report by Avinash Singh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Newspaper, and even visual media, last month went to town pointing fingers at the then Narasimha Rao Government for signing a "deal in a hurry" with Russia for buying 40 SU-30 fighter aircraft after the election notification had been issued.

The "lightening speed apart, the "MOU" [Memorandum of Understanding] (in fact, a diplomatic and political nod only) had caused raising of many an eyebrow since the detractors had charged that private agencies were involved in the deal, with promised kickbacks amounting to Rs [rupees] 200 crore.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Whether or not there was any truth in the allegations is not known, but if the Rovoorouzhenie sources in the Russian trade corporation are to be believed: "What to talk of the SU-30 deal, even the MiG-21bis upgrade contract has not been finalised thus far, though on paper, work is already in progress."

Inquiries made by The Hindustan Times reveal that the hitch—for the Rs 400 crore deal upgrading a fleet of a little over 100 MiG-21bis fish bed fleet (out of a total of 360 machines in IAF's [Indian Air Force] inventory)—is on two counts. One, the present Chief of the Air Staff ACM [Air Chief Marshall] S.K. Sareen is none-too-happy with the arrangement and feels that the deal was a little too expensive. Two, the MiG-21 makers, Mikoyan, too have their reservations on certain issues.

Interestingly talks have been going on for nearly three years and two separate MoUs were signed one each in early 1995 and 1996, to carry out the prestigious project.

Reports indicate that Rosvoorouzhenie is no longer too keen in setting up the proposed Indo-Russian Aviation Private Limited an organisation to be responsible up gradation of MiG-21 aircraft in India (after the initial two pieces were done in Moscow) and also modernisation of all related equipment, barring weaponry, with right to export to other countries.

The proposed corporation to come up at Nashik was to have Mikoyan and MAPO (Moscow Aircraft Production Organisation) on the Russian side and HAL (Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd.) on the home front assisted by Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI).

Sources in the Air Headquarters said the latest developments do not mean that the upgrade deal has run into rough weather. "We are only renegotiating on some parts of the deal and for this a delegation was to visit Russia soon," a senior IAF functionary revealed. The visit has since been put on hold by Ministry of Defence (MoD), pending fluid political situation in the country.

The functionary, however, denied that the new Air Chief was unhappy about the upgrade deal. But he failed to come up with a plausible explanation as to why the experts who have been handling the MiG-21 modernisation contract for nearly three years now were not a part of the team that was to undertake the now stalled trip to Moscow. "The team was to go for discussing some finer points" and impress upon price reduction was the cryptic reply.

As per the original terms and conditions of the first MoU, India was to utilise the acquired technology to upgrade and service these aircraft at the Nashik facility for third countries besides selling the spares manufactured under licence as part of the contract.

It is believed that Russia is no longer ready for under licence production of spares apprehending that it may lose its standing in the international market. Russian equipment and aircraft are in use in over a dozen countries currently.

Under the given stipulations India was also entitled for production and export of radio communication equipment and interrogator/ transponder to identify friend or foe (IFF) among the aircraft flying in and around the country's territory.

The Russians, after an initial hitch had agreed for incorporating ring laser-gyro inertial navigation system and avionics sourced from Western countries including USA or France and Israel. The other parts identified for foreign sourcing by the IAF was 1553B data bus, radar warning receiver (RWR) and cockpit video recorder.

IAF pilots, to quote the sources in the MoD, have been skeptical that given the design of early 1960s Mikoyan had limited options to upgrade the fish bed machines. They say most of the Indian MiG- 21bis due for up gradation are left with eight to 10 years of life. Or, perhaps, a little more.

As per the up gradation programme finalised by the two countries the life of airframe of these aircraft could be extended by five to seven years. Under the circumstances if the Air Chief is requesting the makers, Mikoyan, to lower their prices, presently estimated to be $ 1.8 million per aircraft minus the equipment to be sourced, "there is nothing unusual about it," IAF officials claim.

India: Delhi To Acquire French Technology for MiG-21's

BK2405005096 Madras THE HINDU in English 23 May 96 p 6

[Report by Atul Aneja]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India will acquire from France the key navigation system for its Soviet origin MiG-21 planes, now being jointly modernised by New Delhi and Moscow.

"There was a cut throat competition among the French, US and the UK. We could get the price slashed thrice from the bottom line mentioned," a top source here said. Around Rs. [rupees] 50 crores will be spent on this contract.

The French system is being acquired after India and Russia decided to look at possible purchases for sub-systems from global suppliers.

The modernisation for the first time will increase the plane's ability to intercept hostile aircraft at long ranges,

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

preventing them from carrying out deep strikes. Besides it will enhance the ability of the MIG-21 to carry out limited low level ground attack missions. Its capacity to hit hostile ships is also sought to be increased.

The state-of-the-art inertial navigation system from France will automatically guide the plane towards its target. This will help enhance its lethality. The pilot will now be able to focus almost entirely on combat, reducing dependence on cumbersome maps in the air.

The system will be especially useful for naval missions, guiding the aircraft towards hostile ships over a "featureless" sea. Not surprisingly it will board the X-31A anti-ship missiles.

For the first time, long distance radar guided missiles will be fitted to the plane, helping it engage far away targets in the air. The powerful on-board KOPYO radar, derived from the MiG-29 system can pick up targets at long ranges. The air to air arsenal includes the R-27, the R-73 and R-77 missiles.

The indigenously built Electronic Warfare (EW) and the communication package will be included. The EW suite includes the facility to jam hostile ground based radars, enabling the plane to carry out attack missions unhindered. The X-25 MP anti-radiation missiles can target hostile low level radars, enabling the plane to fly at low heights undetected.

The MiG-MAPO [Moscow Aircraft Production Organization] in Russia is the nodal Research and Development and testing agency for the entire project. It will receive inputs from Phazatron for weapons and Gos NILAS for integrating new avionics. Conversion will be carried out by Sokol [Nizhegorod State Aviation Plant]. The know- how will be eventually transferred to the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for series production.

Around 125 MiG-21 bis will be upgraded at an estimated cost of Rs. eight crores each. "Only the late seventies and eighties origin planes with India are being modernised. We have them in sufficient number and do not have to import second hand upgradable aircraft from third countries in Eastern Europe", sources here said.

The modernised MiG-21s will last up to 2015 to 2020, enough time for the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), the eventual replacement for all the MiG series planes with India to be fine tuned and developed fully.

India: Normalcy Returning to Violence-Hit Areas of Assam

BK2305062196 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Assam, the situation in Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon is fully under control and normalcy is fast returning. No fresh incident of violence has been reported from any part of the affected areas.

Meanwhile, peace committees have been set up representing different communities for restoration of confidence among the people. Schemes are also being prepared to rehabilitate the affected people. The inmates of relief camps have expressed their desire to return to their villages with the improvement in the situation. The chief minister, Mr. Prafullo Kumar Mohanta, is schedule to visit the violence-hit areas today to assess the situation.

India: Competition With Japan for Security Council Membership

BK2205061896 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 21 May 96 p 8

[Report by J.N. Dixit]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] I was having a conversation with the Ambassador of Japan in India, Sakutaro Tanino, a few weeks ago. He expressed satisfaction about the increasing contacts between the two countries, emphasising that the economic policies of the Narasimha Rao government have qualitatively changed India's relations with the Western democracies. He then added that there were no controversies or problems affecting Indo-Japanese relations except the small matter of India and Japan having put forward competing candidatures for a non-permanent seat in the Security Council (from the Asian region) for the years 1997 and 1998. He expressed the hope that the rival candidatures will get sorted out by the time the UN General Assembly elects the non-permanent members of the Council for the next two years at the end of 1996.

India held a non-permanent seat on the Security Council in 1991-92. We have put up our candidature after a gap of four years conforming to the cyclical pattern in which we seek non-permanent membership of the Council. But this time our candidature will have a tough passage. The convention generally followed for electing non-permanent members is that the seats are occupied by rotation by member countries from each geopolitical region. Secondly, the candidates from each region are first agreed upon or finalised by member countries of each regional group. Our candidature, therefore, is predicated on the Asian group of countries endorsing

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

it by consensus. We had indicated our candidature for one of the non-permanent seats in December 1995. We of course anticipated Pakistani objections and a non-committal attitude on the part of Bangladesh about our candidature as far as the South Asian sub- region goes. We had, however, hoped that, as usual, these hurdles would be overcome by a prior Asian regional consensus on our candidature.

Japan's putting forward its candidature has changed the prospects. Though our mission in New York gave a preliminary assessment in the early spring of this year that we might be able to garner enough support from Asian members of the UN for our candidature, reactions received in New York, Geneva and Delhi by the first week of May indicated that we will have to lobby not only in Asian countries, but countries belonging to other regions to support our candidature. We are engaged in a campaign for membership of the Council at two levels. The first one is a campaign to achieve the short-term objective of re-acquiring one of the non-permanent seats on the Council; the second is to ensure that India gets one of the permanent seats on the Security Council when it is expanded along with an increase in the permanent membership of this organ of the UN.

What is the rationale, what are the motives for our seeking a non-permanent seat in the Security Council for the coming two years? We have been out of the Security Council now for four years and, therefore, in terms of rotation and the gap of time between our present candidature and last membership of the Council, we claim that it is our turn. East Asia with the Pacific Rim of Asia already stands represented in the Council with China as a permanent member. South Asia needs representation; India is the legitimate candidate in the context of Pakistan and Sri Lanka already having been members of the Council since 1992. It is our assessment that being a member of the Council will enable us to resist Pakistani pressures on the UN to interfere in the situation in Kashmir more effectively.

Being a member of the Security Council, we would be part of the political caucus of the UN dealing with important political issues and crises. We would be able to influence the deliberations of the Council and the orientation of its initiatives in dealing with such situations. The Council's interaction with the UN Secretariat headed by the Secretary-General would be a very important factor determining the restructuring and reorganisation of the UN, an ongoing process which commenced in 1992. Our being a member of the Council would give us an opportunity to influence this process to some extent.

There is a legitimate conviction that compared to Japan, we would represent the interests of the nonaligned developing countries more effectively. (It is of course a different question whether the nonaligned and developing countries wish India to articulate their collective interests!) Given our positive responses to UN's political and economic initiatives since the end of the cold war and our willing participation in UN peace-keeping operations, we consider our candidature relevant and appropriate. There is also the amorphous and emotional argument that being the largest democracy in the world, and a founding and committed member of the UN, India deserves a role in the supreme political organ of the UN as frequently as possible till India gains a permanent seat on the Security Council.

The incremental aspiration which we have regarding the Security Council is to gain permanent membership of the Council. We have overtly declared our desire for a permanent seat on the Council since 1994 in the committees and working groups of the UN dealing with the expansion of the Council. We have indicated that the size of the Council should be expanded from 15 to 25 with five more permanent members and five more non-permanent members. We have argued that the expanded Council should have balanced, regional and continental representation, taking into account demographic, economic and regional considerations.

Apart from the above criteria, we felt that the permanent membership of the Security Council should go to countries which had a positive track record of commitment to the UN Charter and its objectives, had made a substantial contribution by participating in UN peace-keeping operations and UN-sponsored socio-economic developmental efforts, and consistently fulfilled their financial obligations to the UN.

As far as our desire to become a permanent member of the Security Council goes, the issue merits a separate analysis. As far as the vigorous and extensive lobbying that we have undertaken for filling up the non-permanent membership vacancy in the Security Council for 1997-98 is concerned, the following points have to be noted:

First that three out of the five permanent members of the Security Council, the U.S., the UK and France would clearly prefer Japan to occupy the non-permanent seat during 1997-98. China and Russia are likely to remain non-committal and let the outcome of the general consensus prevail. Secondly, forging a general regional consensus on India's candidature is going to be a difficult exercise. There are clear indications that the ASEAN would prefer Japan. As far as South Asia (our own region) is concerned, we should expect opposition

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

from Pakistan and Bangladesh because of their bilateral controversies with us. In the circumstances, India would have to garner endorsement from membership of the UN in trans- regional terms. It would be logical to assume that most countries of South and Central America will follow the lead of the U.S. and most countries of Africa would vote within the framework of their own political linkages and economic interests related to Japan and India respectively.

India's not signing the NPT [Non-Proliferation Treaty], its principled stand on CTBT [Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty] under discussion, which is unpalatable to most of the influential Western countries, our objections to international regimes related to trade, environment and human rights will result in influential members of the UN obstructing our candidature. It is also worthwhile examining whether competing with Japan for a Security Council seat serves the important objective of strengthening and expanding Indo-Japanese relations at this juncture.

Prospects about the success or failure of our candidature would become clearer when the UN General Assembly commences its meetings in New York this September. One of the important foreign policy decisions which the newly-constituted government will have to take is about this candidature of ours for a non-permanent seat on the Council. We should persist with this candidature only if there are fair prospects of the general membership of the UN supporting our candidature, transcending regional inclinations.

Iran

Iran: Military Units in 'Velayat' Maneuvers Detailed

LD2305162496 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1222 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] I would like to tell you, my dear compatriots, that the units of the ground forces of the army of the Islamic Republic of Iran are present in the area to participate in the great 'Velayat' military maneuver.

I would like to mention a number of these units: Armored Divisions 92 of Khuzestan; 28 of Kordestan; 30 Gorgan; 77 Khorasan; Armored Division 16 of Qazvin; 23 commando, and 58 Zulfaqar. The Brigades 65 of the Special Forces; 55 airborne; commando brigade 25; commando brigade 35; students of the Academy of Military Oficers; students of the military training institute, and a communications group; hundreds of various kinds of tanks; hundreds of various kinds of personnel carriers; hundreds of mobile guns and self-propelled guns; the air-defense group; the special military combat propaganda unit, and the heroes of the air forces of the army of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and ground forces' pilots of the Army Aviation Corps. [passage omitted]

Iran: Over 200,000 Personnel Participate in Velayat Maneuvers

LD2305205396 Tehran IRNA in English 1340 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 23 IRNA — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i arrived at the operational scene of the "Velayat" grand military exercises Thursday afternoon to supervise the performance of the maneuvers. The commander-in-chief of the armed forces will inspect the different stages of the military exercises.

The maneuver is to start this evening in Kushk-e Nosrat, an area between Tehran and Qom. Over 200,000 army personnel have taken part in the grand military exercise which is unprecedented in the Iranian history and the largest of its kind in the world.

The exercise will open with an offensive against a hypothetical enemy. Paratroopers, airborne units, infantry, and armored regiments, artillery batteries and a large number of helicopters of the ground forces will take part in operations in the two-day war games. The 'Velayat' maneuver will be staged in an area of 1,300 square kilometers within an operational theater of 5,400 sq. km.

With the arrival of the leader at the operational scene of the Velayat grand maneuver, the military exercises were officially launched after the leader reviewed a parade by infantry, armored and artillery regiments of the ground forces of the army.

Several thousands of tanks, artillery, katyusha multiple-launcher rockets, personnel carriers and various kinds of heavy and light weapons are used in the maneuver. An atmosphere of enthusiasm prevailed in the operational scene, Kushk-e Nosrat between Tehran and Qom, with the arrival of the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, Ayatollah Khamene'i.

The leader will personally supervise the different stages of the Velayat war games. Over 200,000 personnel of the ground forces will take part in the two-day maneuver. The grand military exercise is performed on the anniversary of the liberation of Khorramshahr from Iraqi occupation in 1982.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Iran: Khamene'i Addresses Troops on 'Velayat' Maneuvers

LD2305163996 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1240 GMT 23 May 96

[Address by Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i at 'Velayat' military maneuvers outside Qom — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. We are grateful to Almighty God for enabling, once again, the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran to demonstrate their capabilities in the construction arena. [passage omitted]

This defensive army and the armed forces are not threatening anyone in this region or in the world. No nation and no state is threatened. The armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran only threaten the aggressors. Anyone with the intention of aggression, will receive a blow. [passage omitted]

The armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran only pose a threat to the aggressor and anyone who plans to attack this country, this nation and this system.

Today, in our region, the threat to the region's security comes from the regime occupying Jerusalem. This regime threatens the territorial integrity of its neighbors and other countries of the region. The nations and governments of the region should understand and should realize this fact whole-heartedly. Any power which supports this aggressive and illegal regime shares its crimes.

Today the Zionists and their allies have become so impudent that they wage propaganda against the Islamic Republic all over the world. The regime's impudence would not have reached this level had the nations and the governments of the region not forgotten how the usurping Zionist regime was created and what its objectives are. If they forget these facts, the nations of the region would face a grave danger. The supporters of the Zionist regime will be blamed for any acts of aggression, invasion, and any move of this regime against its neighboring countries in the holy land of Palestine.

Thanks to our country's independence, which — praise be to God — was realized through the nation's efforts and might, the Islamic Republic declares its stances clearly. The independence of the Islamic Republic was the biggest divine gift to this nation and this country.

Today, the arrogant power of America wants the Islamic Republic of Iran to compromise its independence. It threatens the Islamic Republic of Iran with an economic embargo and sanctions. The Islamic Republic has achieved its independence through struggle. Moreover, it intends to preserve this independence by continuing the struggle. During a period of around one hundred years before the establishment of the Islamic Republic, this nation felt and experienced all the shameful implications of the foreigners' domination over this land. This independence is therefore highly valuable to the Iranian nation. [passage omitted]

Economic sanctions imposed by the regime of the United States, or any other regime for that matter, will not make this nation fragile or vulnerable, and will not scare the Islamic Republic system. These sanctions have no effect on the lives of our people. How can they ever frighten this alert, vigilant, independent, and self- reliant nation with their threats? Even if the sanctions were to intensify much further, the Iranian nation will still safeguard its independence. [passage omitted]

If we want this nation to stand firm and strong against these threats, then the process of construction and development must continue in all departments. The armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps must constantly strive to strengthen themselves even further. A nation which is not able to defend itself will encourage the thuggery of its enemies. We must be able to defend ourselves so as to convince the enemy that it cannot bully our nation and impose its will on our people. What the enemy faces is a nation that has deep roots and a proud history. They therefore cannot impose their will on such a nation. [passage omitted]

Iran: Ground Forces General Praises Velayat War Maneuvers

LD2305192596 Tehran IRNA in English 1849 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 23, IRNA — Commander of Havaniruz [Ground Forces Aviation] General Gholamreza Safa'i said at the site of Velayat maneuver s today that it was a great pride for the Iranian ground forces that the leader of the Islamic revolution had overseen Velayat war games Thursday.

He said the leader had inspected more than 20 squadrons of Havaniruz helicopters that had taken part in Velayati war games.

The aircraft of Havaniruz provided logistic support to the ground forces taking part in the war games.

Iran: Second Stage of 'Velayat' Maneuvers Begins

LD2405062696 Tehran IRNA in English 0617 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Velayat Maneuvers Region, May 24, (IRNA) — The second stage of the grand 'Ve-

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

layat' maneuvers began Friday [24 May] morning at the presence of the supreme leader of the islamic revolution and commander-in-chief of the armed forces, Ayatollah Khamene'i, at Koushk-e Nosrat region, outside the holy city of Qom.

In the second stage of the war games, the fighter planes of the air force, helicopters and the heavy artillery units of the ground forces opened heavy fire on the hypothetical enemy positions. Immediately afterwards the tank units and armored vehicles moved from all axes to take over the targets as it had been planned.

The two-day grand maneuvers of the army in which 200,000 army personnel are taking part, started here yesterday afternoon following a speech by the commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The first stage of the war games ended successfully by an overnight assault into the enemy positions.

Present at the maneuvers site are high-ranking officials of the army and the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps.

Iran: 'Velayat' Maneuvers End, Seen as 'Complete Success'

LD2405084596 Tehran IRNA in English
0750 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Velayat Maneuvers Region, May 24, (IRNA) — The grand maneuvers of the ground forces of the Islamic Republic Army, codenamed 'Velayat', were completed here before noon today. The deputy army commander in charge of the war games, Brigadier General Mohammad Mahmudi, described the two-day maneuvers a complete success.

Brigadier Mahmudi congratulated the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i and all the commanders and the personnel taking part in the war games, for the success and achievements of the operations.

He said that all the pre-determined targets and plans were fully achieved. The brigadier added that although all the armaments and munitions deployed were real, fortunately there has been no mishap during the maneuvers. He attributed this to the precise planning and proper conduct of the war games.

The maneuvers were launched yesterday in the desert of Kushk-e Nosrat, near the holy city of Qom, south of Tehran, at the presence of the Supreme Leader Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i.

The war-game, the largest ever launched, was held in two stages. 200,000 ground forces personnel took part in the games.

Iran: IRGC Conducts First Stage of Amphibious Maneuver in Abadan

LD2305093896 Tehran IRNA in English
0832 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Abadan, Khuzestan Prov., May 23, IRNA — The first stage of the Wali-e-Asr amphibious maneuver was launched here Wednesday night to upgrade the combat power of the ground forces of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC).

The exercise, held to mark the anniversary of liberation of the port city of Khorramshahr, was carried out in the area next to Khorramshahr bridge and the banks of Bahmanshir and Karoun rivers by four IRGC battalions and a group of frogmen.

During the operations, the IRGC personnel captured the embankments of a hypothetical enemy and destroyed their equipment and ammunition.

Terming the first stage of the maneuver succcessful, commander of the southern headquarters of the Wali-e-Asr division, Brigadier General Yazdan Moayyedi Niya, said the second stage of the exercise will be launched on Thursday.

Iran: Turkish Envoy Summoned to Foreign Ministry Over Road Death

LD2205095496 Tehran IRNA in English
0902 GMT 22 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 22, IRNA — Turkish Ambassador to Tehran, Ahmad Mithat Balkan, was summoned to the Foreign Ministry Wednesday after an Iranian mother and her daughter got killed by a Turkish diplomat in a car accident.

Protesting to the carelessness of the diplomat in driving, his inhuman conduct and fleeing the scene of the accident, the Turkish ambassador was called on to carry out the necessary cooperation with the relevant organs.

Balkan in response expressed his sorrows and sympathy on behalf of the Turkish Government and voiced the readiness of Turkish Embassy to cooperate with the law-enforcement forces to carry out investigations on the incident.

Iran: Police Disperse Protesters Outside Turkish Embassy

NC2205142796 Paris AFP in English
1322 GMT May 22 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 22 (AFP) - Police dispersed a protest outside the Turkish embassy here on Wednesday by the family of a mother and daughter

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

allegedly killed by a Turkish diplomat in a hit-and-run accident.

Around 30 people, dressed in black and carrying placards and pictures of the victims, gathered in front of the mission in central Tehran amid tight security, an AFP correspondent said.

They demanded the diplomat be arrested and tried for the murder of Tahereh Nabati, 49, and Marjan Pirani, 19, who both died after the accident in Niavaran district of northern Tehran on May 14.

The protesters calmly dispersed after the police intervention.

Iranian officials have not yet disclosed the name and post of the diplomat involved the accident, but KEYHAN newspaper identified him as Cenk Karaduman, the third secretary and head of the consulate in Tehran.

The paper said Wednesday the diplomat had been driving "too fast" and "not been in a normal state" when he hit the two women, killing the daughter on the spot and fatally wounding the mother.

The JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI daily charged on Wednesday that the diplomat had been hiding in the embassy, and the mission was "arranging to illegally" return him to his country.

The foreign ministry on Tuesday summoned Turkish ambassador Mithat Balkan and protested the diplomat's "carelessness and inhuman act of fleeing the scene of the accident," it said.

It demanded Turkey "cooperate with Iran and make compensation to relieve the survivors of the victims."

The ambassador expressed "sympathy and sorrow" on behalf of the government and said Ankara was ready to cooperate with police to investigate the incident.

Iran: UN Representative—Tehran Committed to Social Summit Goals

LD2405105996 Tehran IRNA in English 0912 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New York, United Nations, May 24, IRNA — Iran's permanent represenative to the United Nations, Kamal Kharrazi, in an address to the special session of the commission for social development here yesterday, said the session provides an opportunity to follow up the objectives envisaged in the world summit for social development.

He added that the Iranian Government is committed to the goals and aspirations of the world social summit including eradication of poverty and follows up its outcome.

Kharrazi said that poverty is the most serious problem facing mankind. In Third World countries the poverty is aggravated by the debt burden, widespread unemployment, deepening environmental crisis, the lack of adequate international aid and deterioration of trade due to protectionist policies practised by certain countries.

Kharrazi added that if poverty is to be eased globally and eradicated, international organizations should promote international assistance, without discrimination, to developing and needy countries to allow them eradicate poverty and ensure basic social protection. Kharrazi maintained that eradication of poverty demand long-term national strategy. Moreover attempts at poverty eradication should transcend the charity approach.

As for the problem of unemployment and underemployement, he said they should be tackled both at global and national levels.

He further added that the implementation and follow up of the Copenhagen declaration and program of action requires close coordination between the U.N. system, international development agencies and multinational banks.

Descripitions designed to realize national social integration, should be equally applied at international level. "Each state should have an equitable and fair share in shaping the international economics, social and political order. We need to forge a rule- based international relations in which might and wealth do not generate rights and the principles of international law are fully observed, Kharrazi stressed.

The coercive economic measures and unilateral actions by certain states against developing countries are inconsistent with the objectives and princples of the charter of the United Nations and also contradict with declaration of the world summit for social development...," he added.

Elsewhere in his speech, Kharrazi referred to social improvements in Iran and said depstie all the difficulties and external factors, social indicators in Iran have improved dramatically.

For instance, he said, food production increased from less than 50 percent of the demand in 1979 to 80 percent in 1995. During the period Iran's population almost doubled.

Literacy among the general population increased from 47.5 percent in 1977 to 82.6 in 1994.

The share of the development budget in the total budget increased from 19.4 percent in 1988-89 to 39 percent in 1994-95. The ambitious goal of 48 percent is expected to

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

be reached in 1996-97, a step unprecedented throughout the history of Iran's economy, he added.

Furthermore, technical and scientific capabilities and infrastructural development capacities of the country have developed to a point that Iranian public and private sectors have now entered into technical assistance programs for implementation of projects abroad.

In the meantime, he added, potable water, roads, schools, telephone services, clinics and other services have been brought to thousands of cities, towns and villages, including the remotest areas of the country. 76 percent of rural pupulation have access to proper roads, 74 percent benefit from electricty and 86 percent have access to safe drinking water. By the end of second development plan, 1999, 98.9 percent of the urban population will be supplied with sanitary piped water.

Moreover, 80 percent of rural population and all people in urban areas have easy and free access to basic health care.

Through implementation of appropriate planning, the number of rural and urban population living below the poverty line has decreased to about 26 and 12.2 percent from 48 and 47 percent, respectively, in the past 15 years.

In addition, the govenment has allocated enormous amount of budget and resources to support the vulnerable segments of the society, including the disabled, elderly and the children. It has also taken steps to improve economic conditions of the lower income brackets through various measures.

Kharrazi added that the program of action of social summit has been incorporated into the second-five year national development plan of the Islamic Republic of Iran which will end in the year 2000. Meanwhile President Hashemi-Rafsanjani has submitted a bill to the parliament aimed at eradication of poverty.

Iran: Rafsanjani—'We Welcome Foreign Investment'

LD2205173496 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 20 May 96 p 1

[Euronews Interviews Rafsanjani: "Iran Welcomes Foreign Investment" — by "Tehran Times service"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran - President Akbar Hashemi- Rafsanjani in an interview with Euro-News [broadcast on Saturday night, 18 May, on Euro-News TV channel] elaborated on domestic, regional as well as international issues. Following is an excerpt from the interview.

On his assessment of the achievements of the Islamic Revolution, he said, we have relatively approached the targets of the revolution but we are in the middle of the way and hope to continue our movement until we meet all the targets of the revolution. We have liberated people from the domination of the USA, saved our economy from dependence and uplifted Islamic culture which was suppressed in the past.

In international affairs we act independently and condemn oppression wherever we face it in the world. In sum, we have stopped exploitation of our country, he said.

Asked if Iran sponsors terrorism and anti-Israeli activities, the president said, our propaganda system is not as strong as that of our enemies. They inculcate their ideas in the minds of the world public opinion through their media. A couple of weeks ago you witnessed an act of terrorism carried out by the Israelis in Qana, Lebanon. I am sure, it will go to the oblivion within a few months. You also know that several Lebanese have been kidnapped by Israel. This is a clear case of kidnapping but the world does not react to that, ironically, the USA despite all these facts, supports Israel, the president said.

Although the UN is not basically an advocate of Lebanon, it has condemned the Israeli act, but the USA has supported it, he said.

Iran is the chief victim of terrorism as compared to other countries, the president said, adding, I have the scars of the terrorists bullets on my body. The same terrorists who killed a number of people in Iran have their offices in the USA and Europe. They meet the parliament members of the Western countries and interview with the press there. You cannot prove that Iran has been involved in a single act of terrorism.

On elections in Israel the president said it is not a matter of concern to Iran, likewise in the USA. We have documents that if published can influence public opinion in the USA but we do not want to do that. Let the people elect their governments. The U.S. and Israeli policies towards Iran will not change with the change of governments.

Asked if there will be any change in U.S. policies and its embargo against Iran, he said, the U.S. embargo has not affected us. Only yesterday we signed an agreement for transferring oil from Kazakhstan via Iran. The Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tedzhen railroad proved that the U.S. pressures cannot convince other countries to follow its embargo call. You are aware that the European Union considers the U.S. policy of embargo as blackmail. We would like the USA to stop such unfair acts.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

On the attitude of the European Union towards Iran and the allegations on Iran's attempts to procure nuclear weapons, Rafsanjani said, it is clear that our nuclear programme is supervised by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Whenever and wherever they like they can inspect our nuclear installations. Last year the agency inspected our installations for several times and other countries can get proper information on our nuclear technology through the IAEA.

Even countries like Ukraine and Kazakhstan spend a lot of money on their nuclear installations without any advantage. We do not see any advantage in having nuclear weapon. The accusations against us is merely an excuse to create obstacles in the way of our development plans.

The doors of our country are open. The interested parties can come and inspect our nuclear installations. We are determined to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, he stressed.

On cooperation between Islam and Christianity, President Rafsanjani said, it is quite possible for the two religions to cooperate. In Iran the constitution provides that all recognized religions can have a representative in the Majles. This is on the basis of Islamic teachings.

In Iran in several big cities the Christians have their own schools and teachers who teach them in their own language. I think the privileges that we give to the minorities in Iran, are not given to the Muslims in Europe.

Religious minorities in Iran perform their religious rituals according to what their religions prescribe, he said, adding whereas the same privileges are not given to Muslims in European countries.

On his assessment of the development plans the president said, the development plans began seven years ago. Some of the projects have gone into stream. If you assess the development plan so far implemented you will be surprised, President Rafsanjani stated.

We have built up at least one dam on every river or it is underway. At present we have 40 dams underway or under construction. This year we will open one dam every 45 days, he added.

We will also open 10 cement factories this year each with a capacity of 2,000 tonnes. We will be among the exporters of cultural produce with the next two years.

As for foreign investment the president said, we welcome foreign investment and have strong law on supporting foreign investment. At present also there is limited foreign investment in Iran, but we can have more foreign investment.

On relations with Egypt and Central Asian republics, he said, though our relations with Egypt is not good, they are improving and we are determined to further improve our ties with Cairo. We have began to set up sugar plants with the help of Egypt and we will expand mutual economic cooperation.

Our relations with the Central Asia republics are cordial. We have signed several agreements with Russia which are underway. We gave good cooperation with Russia in Caspian Sea. We have common stances in several areas and our bilateral cooperation and multilateral cooperation with other Asian countries are expanding.

On the Middle East peace, he said, the main problem lies with the content of the accord. The accord does not provide for the rights of the Palestinians. Moreover, there is a deadlock in the talks. There are four million Palestinian refugees whose condition should be decided upon. If the rights of the Palestinians are not given, then there cannot be any peace even if a superficial calm prevails. This is a truce not a peace.

Iran: Tehran Criticizes Turkish Press Reports Against Iran

NC2205180096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkish 1630 GMT 21 Mar 96

[Unattributed commentary: "The Turkish Newspapers"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The railroad between Iran and Turkmenistan was commissioned 10 days ago. Heads of state, prime ministers, and high-ranking officials from 50 countries attended the ceremony held on the occasion.

The railroad will provide for the transportation of 8 million tons of freight and 1 million passengers a year. It will be of vital importance for the republics of Central Asia. Iran has realized the great project without any financial support from any country. Imperialist circles are disturbed and upset by Iran's achievement because the railroad proves that Iran has improved its position in the world, despite of the U.S. embargo. That is a brief account of the Iran-Turkmenistan railroad.

However, the United States and Israel have always opposed Iran's positive, useful achievements. That is not important, but some Turkish newspapers have also opposed Iran's achievements. For example, they have failed to understand the services the railroad will provide for the region. They also have tried to distort the speech President Hashemi-Rafsanjani made at the magnificent ceremony held to commission the tracks. On 20 May, the daily HURRIYET, which is supported by Zionist circles, strongly blamed the Middle East countries for the attempted assassination of President

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Suleyman Demirel. Several other newspapers known for their anti-Islamic articles have maintained their attacks on Iran. They have published unfounded reports to the effect that the Turkic people in Tabriz are being killed. Their objective was to divert the Turkish people's attention from the realities and convince them that the population is subjected to tribal or racial discrimination. However, it is common knowledge that no one in Iran has been killed or subjected to racial discrimination after the Islamic Revolution. Such an act of massacre would violate God's laws. How can the Islamic Republic of Iran kill people because of the tribe or race they belong to?

It is regrettable that some of the newspapers in the neighboring country have decided to copy the imperialist media. Iran is strongly opposed to, and struggles against, racial discrimination in the world. The concepts of democracy and freedom cannot be used as an excuse for the publications in Turkey against Iran. Obviously, freedom of press cannot be taken to mean that unfounded reports can be published so as to mislead the people. Such reports serve the interests of the anti-Islamic, Zionist, and imperialist circles.

Iran: Paper Condemns Attack on Turkish President Demirel

LD2205172396 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 20 May 96 p 2

[Unattributed commentary: "Dastardly Attempt on Demirel's Life"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Turkish President Suleyman Demirel escaped an assassination attempt Saturday [18 May]. The would-be assassin reportedly belongs to the Refah [Welfare] Party and objected to Turkey signing military cooperation agreements with the Zionist regime. Resorting to violence and terror tactics are reprehensible and unacceptable as a means of bringing about political change. The Saturday attack on the life of Demirel is strongly condemned by all civilized nations.

The Islamic Republic [of Iran], following its basic and Islamic principles, strongly denounces this actions. Such an act is against all religious, moral and social principles and would result only in the destabilization of the entire region.

Iran, with its close geographic proximity and special political, social, cultural, and economic ties with Turkey, would have suffered greatly, had the despicable would-be assassin succeeded in his evil act. Considering the fact that Turkey's population is overwhelmingly Muslim, the collaboration of its government with Islam's avowed enemy is hard to accept by its people and could trigger violent reactions by some of its citizens.

However, changing policial institutions and policies can never be achieved through violent means. We, along with the rest of the world, condemn this attack on the life of President Demirel.

Iran: Paper on Assassination Attempt on Turkey's Demirel

LD2205173996 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 20 May 96 p 2

[Unattributed Commentary: "Who are the Majority Turks?"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There has been another assassination attempt - this time at Turkish President Suleyman Demirel. In the first place, we condemn assassinations. Any assassination. One criterion of a civilized world is that we don't kill someone because we disagree with him. Although one may argue that we do not have a civilized world, that need not stop us from trying to attain one.

It has been said that the assailant was against the Turkish- Israeli agreement signed in February for allowing Israel to use Turkish airspace for military purposes. We are with the assailant on this issue but against his method.

In its eagerness to enter the European Union, Turkey might have forgotten that 99 percent of its population is Muslim. It is essentially a Muslim nation, with a secular government, situated half in Europe and half in Asia.

The recent coalition negotiations have shown that Turkey does not have a single party which represents the majority of people.

What to do? Find out who the majority Turks are. Do they want to join the European Union? Do they want Israel to use their airspace for military uses? Do they have Muslim ideals?

In the shuffle between the Motherland, True Path and Refah [Welfare] parties what might have been forgotten is the will of the Turkish people. What is needed is a system which prevents a Turk from pointing a gun at a leading official because he disagrees with the government's policies.

We condemn the assassination attempt; we do ask Turkey to remember that it is Muslim, that it must heed Muslim interests more than Zionist-American interests. Entering the European Union may be in Turkey's interest, but even that must be achieved at a reasonable price, not at the cost of pleasing Israel, but alienating Turks.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Iran: Christopher Accusation on Terrorism Rejected

LD2205130396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 22 May 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] According to AFP, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher accused Iran once more Tuesday, 21 May, of supporting terrorism. Criticizing the EU dialogue with Iran, he claimed that the United States and its Western allies share similar views on Tehran's foreign policy.

The U.S. secretary of state, speaking at the Institute for Special Research in Washington, also claimed that Iran gives millions of dollars in aid annually to Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Islamic Jihad of Palestine and more than $100 million to the Hizballah in Lebanon.

There are two points in Christopher's statement which need close scrutiny by political analysts. First, he talked of the United States and the EU sharing same views on Iran, whereas statements issued by the political circles and establishments in Europe indicate the contrary. The fact of the matter is that because of a number of political and economic reasons, Europe has never been in agreement with Washington's policy of economic sanctions against Iran. From Europe's point of view, what the United States is spreading around against Iran is in fact a reflection of U.S. intimidation policies in the international arena. Europe sees this as a blackmailing policy by the United States in its international relations and considers it to be harmful to the global free trade.

Another major point raised by the political analysts is the crude propaganda method and blatant falseness of American accusations against Iran. White House officials have on numerous occasions claimed that through its support for Islamic Resistance in Lebanon and Palestine, Iran has been spreading terrorism around, moving in the opposite direction of the so-called Mideast peace process. Nevertheless, they have never produced any documents to prove what they claim.

This is all against the background that the world public opinion was just recently witnessing the very outright and unequivocal U.S. support for the child-killing Zionist regime in its latest invasion of Lebanon and mass murder of Lebanese women and children at the UN refugee camp of Qana, and saw Washington's pressure tactic at the UN Security Council in preventing the condemnation of the most blatant terrorist act by the outlawed Zionist regime against civilians in the little country of Lebanon.

On the whole, it should be taken note that fabricated and relentless United States and Zionist regime black propaganda against the Islamic Republic of Iran is part of their common strategy to destroy the Islamic government in Iran. The evidence shows, however, that this policy is condemned to defeat. Increasing worries of the U.S. officials for mounting opposition by various states in different parts of the world to the U.S. policies on Iran is a clear sign of this defeat.

Iran: U.S Conference Notes 'Spectacular' Opportunities in Iran

NC2405105896 Mashhad KHORASAN in Persian 12 May 96 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "Isolation for the United States!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The recent remarks by German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel regarding Europe's firm opposition to U.S. willful interference in the world's free trade, especially its implementation of unilateral embargoes against companies that have relations with Iran, cannot be construed as the the European Union's [EU] usual type of opposition to the U.S. actions.

These remarks were made when the European Commission criticized the U.S. harsh tone and said: The United States wants to play the role of a policeman as regards free trade. Thus, we should expect a deeper chasm between Europe and the United States in the international arena in the event the United States persists in adhering to its latest isolationist policy.

The United States is wallowing in the same isolation regarding some of its foreign policies that it had intended for Iran. Another aspect of the issue is that inside the United States some political and economic circles—most of which are directed by multinational oil conglomerates in the United States— are expressing concern about Clinton's foreign policies. They cannot close their eyes to the vast and lucrative oil and gas markets especially since in the past few years, due to the White House's political interference, they have been deprived of some massive economic projects with Iran that are guaranteed to be extremely profitable. Instead, companies from Europe, Southeast Asia, and even South America took their places one by one.

Iran's strategic role in the two major oil-rich regions of the world, that is the Persian Gulf and the area of the Caspian Sea and the Caucasus, is not something that can easily be ignored by the multinational companies.

Accordingly, these circles recently convened a conference on the theme of "Iran in the process of change" in order to focus the attention of U.S. foreign policy on this point that indifference to a presence in Iran will

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

have costly economic and political repercussions for the United States."

At this conference, which was convened to assess the political and economic conditions in Iran, attention was attracted to the cooperation and participation of high-level American officials and representatives of multinational oil and gas companies.

Stephen Grummon, a member of the National Security Council [NSC] at the White House, Brent Scowcroft, George Bush's adviser in the NSC, and former Secretary of Trade Robert Mitfalker were among the speakers at this conference. Dick Cheney, the Bush administration's defense secretary, was also part of the committee that held the conference.

The gist of the remarks by all these officials and other economic experts participating in the conference was that the economic possibilities in Iran are so spectacular that they cannot be ignored. Hence, U.S. policies should move in that direction so that some sort of dialogue is initiated between Iran and the United States and the latter is not deprived of the extensive economic market in Iran.

It appears that U.S. foreign policy is the object of criticism from two directions: from Europe and Asia and from within the United States. Thus it seems that when the fate of the presidential elections in the United States is decided, U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, especially with regard to Iran, will undergo some serious changes.

On the other hand, the inauguration of the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railroad project—in which high-level officials from more than 50 countries are expected to participate—indicates Iran's strategic importance for all the countries of the world and international indifference to the malevolent U.S. plans against Iran.

Such extensive participation proves that the United States has become isolated in its embargo against the Islamic Republic of Iran. The strengthening of regional relations and the expansion of the resources of the Economic Cooperation Organization [ECO] in which Iran is playing a pivotal role has reaffirmed the ineffectiveness of U.S. plots.

Experience has shown that not a single country in the world, except the Zionist regime, is prepared to sacrifice its economic and political benefits for the U.S.'s ephemeral enticements and power- seeking objectives.

Iran: Commentary Views Background to Kohl's U.S. Visit

LD2205191596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 22 May 96

[Unattributed Commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Invited by U.S. President Bill Clinton, the German Chancellor Helmut Kohl left for a visit of the United States today, Wednesday 22 May. During his three day visit of the United States, Kohl will meet and talk with Clinton and U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry. German political circles believe that the most important issues which will be taken up by the two side will be the new NATO structure and its expansion into eastern Europe and also new developments in Russia and former Yugoslavia.

According to other informed sources, however, the two leaders will try to resolve differences of opinion which have affected relations between Bonn and Washington in recent months. One of these was lack of support by the Germans, along with other European countries, for hostile United States' policies toward the Islamic Republic of Iran and Cuba, a move which caused Washington's dissatisfaction with its European allies and its defeat in trying to effectively isolate and implement economic sanctions against Iran and Cuba.

Meanwhile both Germany and the United States have common interests which will try to talk them over also during Kohl's visit of the United States. Political analysts say that besides trying to solve and resolve differences between Bonn and Washington, Clinton resorted to inviting Kohl for a visit of the United States to also use the visit as a propaganda means since the meetings of the two leader will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, whose inhabitants are mostly from German ancestry. Hence Clinton expects Kohl to call on German-Americans to vote for him in the upcoming United States presidential elections.

Elsewhere, Germany's clout with the Croats and Croatia has always been an issue of interest to political circles in the United States. Hence, under circumstances when developments in the Balkans, especially in relation to the Croats and Muslims, were a matter of concern and brought about the possibilities of serious hurdles in the way of the Dayton peace accord, Washington expects Germany to exert pressure on the Croats and the Zagreb government in order to pave the ground for the implementation of the Dayton peace accord. For any obstacle blocking the accord at at juncture when Washington is direly in need of improving its foreign policy report card would have a negative impact on Clinton's presidential campaign.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Germany also feels that in order to race ahead of France and Britain in a close competition to snatch the European Union's leadership, it is desperately in need of healing its rifts with Washington. It, however, seems far from likely that it shows flexibility over its national interests in the face of Washington. An example, Germany's failure to take U.S. lead in imposing sanctions against Cuba and Iran.

Iran: SAIRI Leader—UN Sanctions on Iraq 'Unfair'

LD2205171696 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 19 May 96 p 1

[Interview with "Ayatollah Hakim": "Opposition forces to unite against Saddam Husayn"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran - The head of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution for Iraq (SAIRI), Ayatollah Mohammad Baqer Hakim, urged the United Nations in its sanctions against Iraq to make a distinction between the Iraqi nation and the Iraqi government.

SAIRI maintains that the sanctions imposed on Iraq are unfair, Hakim told the TEHRAN TIMES. Although the Ba'thist regime deserves sever punitive measures, it is unfair for the Iraqi nation to suffer a shortage of food and medicine. At a time when the Iraqi nation is starving under the UN Security Council Resolution 986, the oil-for- food deal, the Ba'thist regime extravagantly spends about 1bn dollars annually for the construction of palaces decorated with gaudy finery.

At present there are thousands of families which the Iraqi regime has deprived of food coupons. For instance, at least 22,000 families in the southern province of al-Nasiriyah are deprived of such coupons. Thus, SAIRI demands tight UN monitoring of the distribution of foodstuffs and medicine in Iraq.

Elaborating on his talks with the Syrian Vice-President 'Abd-al- Halim Khaddam here recently, the SAIRI head said that among other issues discussed at the meeting was the impact of the Zionist regime's fresh barrage of attacks against southern Lebanon.

The two sides shared the view that the attacks yielded no result fro the Zionist regime; rather it was a political fiasco for the Zionists.

According to Hakim, the prevailing situation in Iraq was the second issue discussed at his meeting with the Syrian official. The two sides agreed on a conference to tackle the details of an Iraqi national plan whose principles have been agreed upon during a Damascus meeting. The plan calls for certain changes in Iraq.

Asked about the Damascus conference, Ayatollah Hakim said that in their final statement, the participants in the conference called for designing a national plan to bring about certain changes in Iraq with the cooperation of all Iraqi opposition groups and the military.

Asked whether presiding over the Damascus conference meant that SAIRI would be the leader of the opposition groups, he said there was no word on leadership, but as the participants trusted SAIRI, they had assigned him to preside over the conference.

On the repeated incursion of Turkish troops to Iraq's Kurdistan, Ayatollah Hakim said there is consensus between Ankara and Baghdad on the Turkish operation against the Iraqi Kurds.

SAIRI maintains there is no justification for such military activity inside Iraqi territory, said Hakim, stressing that Turkey should tackle its domestic problems first.

Yet SAIRI holds the view that Iraq should not be converted to a threat against any of the regional countries and that SAIRI strictly condemns activities against regional countries.

Commenting on the agreement signed recently between Turkey and the Zionist regime under which Ankara has allowed the Zionists to use Turkish bases, Ayatollah Hakim said the Zionist regime is a chief violator of international law; any agreement with it will not be to the benefit of the other side. Thus, the agreement will not serve Turkey's national interests.

Asked about recent accusations by Washington that Iran has helped Iraq escape UN sanctions, Ayatollah Hakim denied the allegations, saying that the issue refers to Baghdad's attempt at smuggling abroad and its illegal sale of oil.

He called U.S. allegations against Iran biased, saying that due to its enmity with Tehran, Washington tries to create crises for Iran by levelling such allegations.

In conclusion, the SAIRI head called on the Iraqi nation to maintain its unity. He said that it is only through unity within the nation including between the Sunni and Shi'a Muslims and the Iraqi Army, that a massive revolution would be materialized in Iraq.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Iran: Iraq-UN Deal To Implement Resolution 986 Discussed

NC2305173896 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 22 May 96 p 2

[Editorial: "UN Following Policy of Double Standard"—received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A memorandum of understanding was signed Monday [20 May] in New York by Iraq and the United Nations on implementing the Security Council Resolution 986. The resolution, adopted in April 1995, allows Iraq to export up to two billion dollars of oil every six months to buy the much-needed food and medicine. Iraq's oil-for-food deal with the UN allowing the first limited sales of oil is the first easing of six-year-long economic sanctions imposed after Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait in August 1990. The accord reached seems to be the first step toward lifting the sanctions and ending the suffering and misery of the Iraqi people, who have undergone straitened circumstances in the recent years due to the lack of adequate food and medicine. It is clear that people should not pay for the mistakes and misdeeds of their leaders who are power maniac and build castles in the air. The UN has frequently proven that it is able to implement its resolutions if it wishes to do so. Therefore, the only answer to the question that why some UN resolutions have remained unimplemented for so long in the past is that the UN is following a double-standard policy. Although following the Second World War, the UN was formed as a platform for nations and under a Charter which vowed to fight aggression, due to influence of some countries, it has not acted upon its international commitments fair and square. To cite a clear example, ever since the illegitimate establishment of the Zionist state in the Muslim territories, the Zionists have been incessantly launching attacks and air raids on the Muslims in the neighboring countries, in particular the displaced Palestinians living in the refugee camps and the Lebanese people. Out of so many resolutions issued by the UN in condemnation of the Zionist aggressions and demanding punitive measures against Israel, not a single one has yet been implemented—all have either been vetoed by the U.S. or left in abeyance. The world public opinion no longer accepts a double- standard policy by an international entity which claims to be the patron of justice.

Iran Defends Role in Bosnia-Herzegovina

MS2305101696 London THE EUROPEAN in English 23-29 May 96 p 1

[Report incorporating remarks by Iran's ambassador to Bosnia Mohammad Ebrahim Taherian, by Ali Moghnie: "Iran Defiant Over Arms for Bosnia"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo — Iran's ambassador to Bosnia Mohammad Ebrahim Taherian has defended his country's role in former Yugoslavia as the West seeks to return the region to peace after four years of conflict.

Western countries including the United States, which brokered the peace treaty that halted the fighting in Bosnia, are worried that Iran is trying to gain a foothold in Europe to spread Islamic fundamentalism. Iran was the principal arms supplier to Bosnia during its conflict with Serb rebels, in contravention of a United Nations weapons embargo.

The West also fears that Muslim fundamentalist mujahidin volunteers from countries including Iran could attack the Nato-led peacekeeping forces, whose largest contingent is American. The mujahidin were required to leave Bosnia under the terms of the peace accords, but some remain.

Speaking at his embassy, housed in a magnificent riverside building and the largest legation in Sarajevo, Taherian complained of what he called "rumours" of US pressure on the Bosnian government to reject the Iranians. He said only the Bosnian government could ask them to leave. All Iran's soldiers had left, he said, but Tehran maintained the right to continue providing arms and military training.

Taherian said: "We have come to train the Bosnians to defend their land. The international community wants such training to stop, so that Bosnian guns will not be directed towards a community that looked on during some of the ugliest genocide in the history of Europe.

"We are proud that we did our duty to help the Bosnian population in its most difficult times. The United States or any other country has no right to stop us sending arms to the Bosnian army."

The ambassador said he was concerned that important aspects of the Dayton peace accords were not being honoured, and he also criticised the US and the West for "trying to push the Bosnian population away from their culture and religion". But Iran was ready to help reconstruct the war-shattered country and had already pledged aid worth $50 million, he said.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Iran: Tehran Views Turkish-Greek Tensions in Aegean Sea

LD2205223196 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 22 May 96

[Unattributed Commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Following growing differences between Greece and Turkey, we are once again witnessing a new round of tensions in the two countries' ties. For example, in the last general assembly attended by NATO member states in Athens, Turkish MPs left the conference in protest to Greek parliament speaker's remarks which insinuated that Turkey is behind all escalating tensions in the Aegean Sea. Political experts maintain the new round of propaganda warfare between Turkey and Greece is a natural outcome of political developments taking place in the region. Ankara and Athens are at odds over sovereignty of the Aegean Sea, state of Cyprus, and the minority of Turkish population in Thrace in Greece, and finally, a claim laid by both to the Cardak, or as the Greek call it, the Emia island, so much so that during the past few years they have come close to the precarious abyss of all [?time] and all out war.

Turkey and Greece, both NATO member states, have so far failed to overcome differences even through NATO's mediation. NATO's Spanish Secretary General Javier Solana has gone to Turkey so as to head off any heating up of the differences by holding talks with the two countries' dignitaries. Solana, speaking with the Anatolia News Agency in Turkey, said, I don't feel upbeat about a speedy removal of difference between Turkey and Greece. NATO's secretary general added: Differences between the two countries during the past few days don't seem to fade away in a matter of days, weeks or even months, as long as the two countries a strong will to set aside their difference. Since diverging views of the two countries Greece and Turkey over NATO's performance, especially in its eastern sectors, has had negative impacts, NATO officials intend to head off any precipitation of the differences in any possible manner. Recently [a] security pact between Turkey and the Zionist regime as well as the Turkish admiral's visit to Tel Aviv has touched Greece on the raw. For this reason, the Greek government intends to boost its ties with the Arab countries as a counter-measure to the Turkish-Zionist military accord.

Greek officials, through creating ties with the United States, attempted to prevent further U.S. military support of Turkey. It is to be noted the Unite States and Turkish ties have been strained because of the former [Greek] prime minister, Papandreou's tough stance in the face of Washington. And may be it is because of this that the United States' Secretary of State Warren Christopher, during the Turkish foreign minister's trip to Washington, had announced that Washington is not willing to sell ten of its super Cobra choppers to Turkey, though America has made efforts to fish in the troubled waters of differences plaguing Turkish-Greek ties. To the same end, the United States, by creating a sort of positive balance, is trying to maintain an equilibrium in its ties with Ankara and Athens. Political analysts hold [that] we should bear in mind the differences between the two countries go back to an outbreak of war between Turkey and Greece, starting in 1920, ending in 1924, over territorial differences in islands in the Aegean Sea. Some archives point out that it had actually been designed by Britain and the U.S. prior to World War Two. An outbreak of war and imperial policies brought about in atmosphere of deep mistrust between the two states, something which could only be healed by a suitable political climate enabling friendship and cooperation of the two countries.

On the whole, it could be said that in light of precipitating crisis plaguing Greek-Turkish ties during recent years, a heightening of the crisis will probably give away to milder differences and finally fade away.

Iran: Ukraine Deputy Prime Minister Calls For Expanded Trade

LD2205133096 Tehran IRNA in English 1303 GMT 22 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 22, IRNA — The visiting Ukrainian deputy prime minister, Anatoliy Kinakh, in a meeting on Tuesday [21 May] with head of the chamber of commerce, industries and mines 'Ali Naqi Khamushi, called for expansion of trade ties and exchange of commercial data.

The Ukranian official described as important the role played by the chambers of the two countries both in strengthening solidarity between the two nations and in introducing industrial and commercial companies.

Underlining the need for reciprocal visits by private sectors of the two countries, Kinakh noted that an agreement has been reached between Ukraine and the Central Bank of Iran on providing new facilities for export activities of businessmen.

Meanwhile, Khamushi underscored the need for having access to trade data and proposed to the Ukranian official to hold a gathering in Tehran for gaining better knowledge on Ukrainian commercial potentials.

The two officials also discussed multilateral trade activities and removal of obstacles on the way of bilateral trade.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Iran: Rafsanjani Holds Talks With Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister

LD2305185796 Tehran IRNA in English 1615 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 23, IRNA — President Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here on Wednesday received the visiting Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Anatoliy Kinakh.

Kinakh described the outcome of his negotiations with Iranian officials as excellent and said Ukraine considered the strengthening of the economic and trade relations with Iran will not only help promote peace and stability in the region in particular but also in the world in general. He voiced his country's willingness to develop its relations with Iran on the basis of mutual interest and respect.

Kinakh said during his visit to Iran, he signed agreements on banking and mutual support for investment as well as cancellation of double-tax system between the two countries. He said, "we believe the accords signed between the two countries have prepared legal grounds for joint venture." Kinakh criticized the US-sponsored unilateral trade embargo on Iran and said Ukraine has objection to the embargo and regards it as futile attempt on the part of the United States. He called for the enforcement of gas pipeline project which will convey Iranian gas to Ukraine.

President Rafsanjani expressed pleasure at observing the growth of ties between Iran and Ukraine, pointing out that exchange of visits by top ranking officials of the two countries would serve to promote bilateral relations. He voiced Iranian readiness to implement gas pipeline project from Iran to Ukraine.

Kinakh once again extended the invitation of the Ukranian president to President Rafsanjani to visit Kiev which was accepted.

Iran: Nateq-Nuri, Sudanese Energy Minister Discuss Bilateral Ties

LD2205191096 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 22 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. Nateq-Nuri, speaker of the Islamic Consultative Majles, met with the Sudanese minister of oil and energy [as heard] today, and stressed: America's biggest concern is the global revival of Islamic ideology. Mr. Nateq-Nuri condemned the imposition of sanctions and pressures by America against the free and independent countries of the world, and added: The free nations should endeavor and use their own resources to neutralize the conspiracies hatched by the world arrogance.

The speaker of the Islamic Consultative Majles referred to the sincere relations that exist between Iran and Sudan and called for their expansion by making the two countries' joint economic committee more active.

The Sudanese minister of oil and energy described relations between Iran and Sudan as very satisfactory, and added: The implementation of the huge Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tedzhen railway project was a response to the U.S. plots that aimed to isolate Iran. It was also a model for the countries that wish to manage their own affairs independently.

Iran: Iranian-Sudanese Letter of Understanding Signed

LD2305182496 Tehran IRNA in English 1405 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 23, IRNA — Iran and Sudan here on Thursday [23 May] signed a letter of understanding for further economic and cultural cooperation.

The agreement was signed at the end of the third session of Iran-Sudan Joint Economic Commission by Iran's Minister of Construction Jihad Gholam Reza Foruzesh and the visiting Minister of Energy and Mining of Sudan, 'Awad Ahmad al-Jabaz.

According to the memorandum, Iran and Sudan are to expand cooperation in the fields of oil, trade, culture, technology and construction.

Both sides called for exchange of trade delegations along with economic and commercial information, setting up of an air link between the two countries, and cooperation in the field of banking.

Iran voiced readiness to transit commodities from Sudan to the Central Asian republics and vice versa, supply Sudan with various human and animal vaccines, with special discount, and cooperate in other areas such as gold mining, telephone and postal service, rehabilitation of deserts and stabilization of sand.

Al-Jabaz on his part underlined his country's willingness to have a refinery constructed in Khartoum by Iran, and also voiced Sudan's readiness to launch joint ventures with Iran.

Iran: Trade With China To Double by Mar 1997

LD2205172496 Tehran IRNA in English 1412 GMT 22 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beijing, May 22, IRNA — Volume of commercial transactions between Iran and China is to double by the year end on March 20, 1997.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

The first secretary and head of the economic department at Iran's embassy in Beijing Mas'ud Maleki said here on Wednesday [22 May] that the first exclusive fair of Iran is to be inaugurated in the Chinese capital on Friday in the presence of Iranian Deputy Commerce Minister Noqrekar Shirazi.

The volume of commercial transactions between Iran and China stood at dlrs. 504 million last year (ended March 19, 1996).

Touching on the significant role of the fair in expanding commercial ties and economic cooperation between Iran and China, Maleki said that the volume of trade exchanges could surpass dlrs. one billion.

According to Maleki the issue of the setting up of trade fairs in each other's capitals had been raised and approved at the eighth session of Tehran-Beijing joint economic, technical and scientific commission last year.

Among main commodities that Iran exports to China are crude oil, steel sheets, minerals and dried fruits, while those imported by Iran from China are electronic and chemical products as well as light industries, Maleki concluded.

Iran: Larijani Meets Japanese Deputy Foreign Minster

LD2305100696 Tehran IRNA in English 0703 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 23, IRNA — The visiting Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister Shunji Yanai in a meeting here Wednesday [23 May] with the deputy chairman of Majles foreign policies commission, Mohammad Javad Larijani, said that Japan's foreign policy is based on its national interests and is not dictated by any other country.

"We believe that relations of Western countries with the Islamic republic should be based on constructive talks and mutual understanding," he added.

Emphasizing importance of Iran-Japan ties, Yanai called for further expansion of bilateral political and parliamentary relations and lauded Iran for its constructive and effective steps in settling the Bosnian crisis.

Referring to the international developments of the past decade, Larijani said that the recent events have compelled many countries to alter their foreign policies. He added that Tehran has formulated its foreign policies in accordance with its national interests.

Larijani also touched on U.S. hostile stance towards Iran, saying that the present world will not bow to the U.S. domination-seeking policies.

Meanwhie, the visiting Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister Shuni Yanai and his Iranian counterpart for Asia-Pacific affairs, 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi, in a meeting here on Wednesday, discussed the regional and international political issues and called for widening Iran-Japan relations.

Rejecting the idea of isolation of Iran, Yanai called for continuation of constructive negotiations with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Japanese deputy foreign minister pointed to the Islamic republic's influence on the region and lauded Iran's efforts in settling the regional crises, particularly, those in Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Lebanon.

Yanai also thanked Iran for serious efforts towards establishment and preservation of peace and stability in the Persian Gulf region.

Expressing satisfaction over the growing Iran-Japan relations, Borujerdi announced the Islamic republic's willingness to further deepen bilateral cooperation.

Iran: Culture Minister Calls For Cooperation With Uzbekistan

LD2205141696 Tehran IRNA in English 1407 GMT 22 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 22, IRNA — Iranian Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mostafa Mirsalim and the Uzbek Ambassador to Tehran Arkun Khugayev here on Wednesday [22 May] discussed ways to develop cultural relations between the two countries.

Mirsalim referred to the cultural and religious bonds between the two nations and stressed the need for expansion of mutual cooperation in cultural and artistic fields, including preservation of cultural heritage.

The Iranian minister proposed that different artistic groups hold cultural weeks in Iran and Uzbekistan and invited Uzbekistan to take part in tourism fair held annually in Iran.

Khugayev for his part said that the Persian language is being taught in Uzbekistan as the main language of the Uzbek people which indicate the interest of the people in their historical background.

Khugayev called for active contribution of Iranian architects to restoring the historical monuments in Uzbekistan and invited Iranian experts to attend a congress in Uzbekistan in commemoration of Amir Teimur Gorkan.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Iran: Majles Amends Penal Code at Guardian Council Request

LD2205132096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 22 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At today's open Majles session, the bill on Islamic punishment — the section on state punishments and preventative punishments — was amended. According to our correspondent, the bill, which was returned to the Majles by the Guardian Council because one of its appended articles contravened the Shari'ah, was discussed and the appended article was approved after being amended. In accordance with this article, the trial judge may, in view of the specific characteristics of the offense and the offender and the number of times an offense has been committed, make use, as appropriate and if necessary, of regulations regarding punishment reduction, suspension, alteration, or substitution, such as temporary deprivation from public services.

Also at today's open Majles session, the rapporteur of the Committee for Councils and Internal Affairs continued presenting his report regarding the investigation and inquiry into the performance of Tehran Municipality.

The rapporteur of the Committee for the Institutions of the Revolution also presented that committee's report regarding the investigation and inquiry about the Foundation for the Dispossessed and War-Disabled. The presentation will be continued in the next open session.

Iran: Khamene'i Speaks on Anniversary of Khomeyni's Death

LD2205164096 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 22 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the exalted leader of the Islamic revolution, held a meeting today with the officials of the headquarters for commemorating the seventh anniversary of Imam Khomeyni's passing away, may God be satisfied with him. Referring to the important coincidence of the Ashura period [anniversary of martyrdom of Imam Husayn, third Shiite imam] with the anniversary of the late imam's death, he stressed: Imam Khomeyni's movement must be explained and understood with the continuation and under the auspices of the Ashura movement so that the path of the Islamic revolution does not lose its hue or is not lost in the course of history and under various events. [passage omitted]

The exalted leader considered the true aim of the setting up of an Islamic republic to be the realization of the objectives of Islam. He said: The [choosing of a] republic and reliance on the people is the permanent hue of the Islamic Republic system, but the choice of a republic is because it takes us to Islam and all the animosity shown by the world arrogance against this system is over the same issue, that is, the adherance of the nation and officials to Islam. We believe Islam has a goal and offers clear answers for life's principal issues.

The exalted leader of the revolution referred to America's concern about our Islamic character and the animosity of world arrogance because of the presence of religious jurisprudence, Islamic laws, and the existence of the clergy in the country. He said: Islam is principally for dialogue and negotiation but the question is who talk to, where, and on what subject? They would like the Islamic Republic of Iran not to exist in the world at all. And the Islamic system has always thwarted them, of course with the help of God, and will continue do so.

The exalted leader of the revolution referred to the adroitness, social outlook, and foresight of Imam Khomeyni, and he said: The imam took account all the aspects of the revolution and, thanks be to God, at the moment the reigns of power are in the hands of those who wholeheartedly believe in the tenets of Islam and have no difficulty in this respect. The nonsense talked by some people will not get them anywhere. [passage omitted]

Iran: Majles Speaker Delivers Address at Khomeyni's Mausoleum

LD2305171596 Tehran IRNA in English 1330 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TEHRAN, May 23, IRNA — Majles Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri said here on Thursday that backing down from the principles of the revolution is a bad idea set forth by those who are influenced by the enemies of Islam.

In his address at the mausoleum of the late Imam Khomeyni, on the occasion of the anniversary of liberation of the Southern Port City of Khorramshahr from Iraqi occupation in 1982, Nateq-Nuri said the prestige and dignity of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the world is indebted to its uncompromising stand.

He congratulated the armed forces on the anniversary of liberation of Khorramshahr and said eight years of sacred defence (1980-1988) against the arrogant powers and the hegemonists has been inspired by 'Ashura and the lesson taught by Imam Husayn (A.S.), the third imam of the household of prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

On 'Ashura, the tenth day of the mourning month of Muharram al- Haram, Imam Husayn was martyred in an unequal battle with the army of the tyrant ruler of the time (Yazid).

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

He said, "Imam Khomeyni following the example of Imam Husayn has taught us to stand against any power and not to bow to other than the Almighty."

The speaker said the Islamic ideology is growing fast despite all the military and economic pressures being exerted on Iran.

He said, "the animosity of the enemies has further increased against us. Therefore, we should exercise vigilance and not to abandon our values and principles."

Iran: 'Upholders of Hezbollah' Group Formed in Mashhad

LD2205202796 Tehran IRAN in Persian 20 May 96 p 16

[From the "Any Other News?" section]

[FBIS Translated Text] The first news item is: A group of young people in Mashhad gathered opposite a mosque in the city and announced the formation of a group called "Qavvamin-e Hezbollah" [Upholders of Hezbollah]. One of the demonstrators told a correspondent for the "Any other news" column: "One of the initial actions which we intend to take is to hold a huge gathering of all the hezbollah cells in Mashhad and its suburbs."

Iran: Students in Karaj March in Support of Islamic Values

LD2205171496 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1215 GMT 22 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Students of the teacher training college in the town of Karaj took part in a splendid march today to declare their support for the remarks made by the eminent leader of the revolution ['Ali Khamene'i] about the preservation of the values of the Islamic revolution and the lifting of the spiritual and religious levels at universities.

During the march, the students chanted revolutionary slogans and, declaring their support for the active presence of clergymen in universities, they once again declared their support for the remarks of the eminent leader about the need to combat deviation and corruption, and safeguard Islamic values at universities. According to our report, at the end of their march, the students issued a 12- point resolution and called for the implementation of the eminent leader's words of guidance at all the universities in the country. [Video shows several hundred marching students]

Iran: SALAM Readers on Tehran Movie Theater Attacks

LD2205171896 Tehran SALAM in Persian 19 May 96 p 3

[From the "Hello, SALAM" column]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Unidentified reader] SALAM quoted the head of the judiciary [Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi] as saying that Iran would not trample on Islamic instructions just to please international organizations. In view of a recent event in the Qods Movie Theater [in Tehran, where Hezbollah supporters attempted to stop the audience watching an Indian film, and apparently assaulted the audience], and in view of the fact that the same head of the judiciary and his legal and judicial officials refused to respond to the complaints launched by the audience who had been subjected to beating and battering, we can conclude that they trampled on Islamic instructions. Why should they attack the audience in a movie theater, who were watching a film endorsed and screened by the Islamic Guidance Ministry? Of course, they may not trample on Islamic tenets, but they certainly can abandon them!

[Second unidentified reader] The officials of the Ansar-e Hezbollah [Supporters of Hezbollah] group have admitted that they were responsible for attacking the Qods Movie Theater and for inflicting material damage. So why should the Islamic Guidance Ministry pay compensation to the Movie Theater from the public purse? O Imam 'Ali [first Shiite imam], you were so careful with spending public assets that you encouraged a blind man to carry a burning ember on his hand; now open your own eyes to see how those who claim to be following your example as rulers are wasting the assets of the public purse.

Iran: Majles Speaker, Ministers Attend War Victims' Funeral

LD2405112296 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Various strata of society took part in a funeral ceremony for 800 martyrs of the imposed war [Iran-Iraq conflict] this morning, and carried their perfumed bodies to Tehran University, the Friday prayers' venue. After Friday prayers, the worshipers carried the coffins shoulder high for the burial ceremony. The Majles speaker ['Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri] and members of the cabinet attended the funeral ceremony.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Iran: Report Views Reasons Behind Cancelled University Lecture

LD2305101996 Tehran AKHBAR in Persian 19 May p 1

[Unattributed report: "Amir Kabir University Says Convening A Lecture Requires Permission From Cultural Revolution Council, No Program Today"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the wake of the recent developments in the Amir Kabir Industrial University, a statement was issued by the university's public relations department. The statement, in part, says:

Following the disclosure of reports that the Islamic society of the university was planning to mark the anniversary of Professor Motahhari's martyrdom in order to obtain a permit from the Cultural Revolution Council — in accordance with the existing regulations of the council — the Islamic society was asked to inform the council about its programs. Unfortunately, the Islamic society went ahead with its programs without informing the council or obtaining a permit. The university board of governors then suggested that perhaps the programs should go ahead as a roundtable meeting. [passage omitted]

The issue was, however, more complicated as a result of some sensitivities shown [that is, demonstrations by the Hezbollah supporters] outside the university. When the two sides [Islamic society and Hezbollah] released statements, the university board of governors tried to reduce tension by writing a letter to Dr. 'Abdol- Karim Sorush [who had been invited by the Islamic society as a guest speaker], asking him not to attend the [Motahhari's martyrdom anniversary] ceremony. In view of Dr. Sorush's acceptance of the request and since no permit had been obtained from the Cultural Revolution Council, the university announced the cancellation of the ceremony through the press on 23 Ordibehesht 1375 [12 May 1996].

Needless to say that in accordance with the regulations, the Islamic society, or any other organ that wishes to organize ceremonies inside the university or invite guest speakers, must apply for a permit through the relevant authorities mentioned above. And since no such permit has been requested so far, we do not have any programs planned for today.

The university board of governors is in favor of organizing lectures and seminars on various topics and will do its best to make sure that our dear students would continue their learning process to reach a bright future in a climate of understanding and peaceful environment.

Iran: Ayatollah Discusses Role of Universities

LD2305222496 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 19 May 96 p 2

[Unattributed article: "University Is a Place To Express Contrasting Views, Not a Place To Attack Islamic Values"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The university is a place for exchange of views and not a center for compromise and attacks on Islamic values, Ayatollah Mahdavi Kani said in an address to the 29th gathering of the university chancellors from across the country.

He said: University staff and students have the future of the country in their hands and a climate of lofty values must prevail over these places.

Ayatollah Mahdavi Kani pointed out that universities must become centres for training pious and responsible elements and that the Koran gives priority to religious belief over scientific knowledge because belief is fundamental while science is an instrument for achieving goals.

He stressed the need to follow the guidance of the eminent leader of the revolution and said: when the Guardian Jurisconsult makes a statement it is our duty to follow it up seriously and bring about changes.

The head of the Imam Sadeq University criticized the present situation at the universities and said: I think we are not going to get anywhere with the way that universities have been set up; and we are not going to advance either in the field of ethics or scholarship. The teaching of sciences and ethics needs teachers and a great deal of work. These things cannot be solved by setting up classes or giving lectures.

He said university lecturers played an important part in universities and said: the lecturer who has no time to speak with the students or the lecturer who spends all his time teaching can not succeed, because there is not enough time for them to study or research.

Ayatollah Mahdavi Kani praised services rendered in universities since the cultural revolution and pointed out that despite great efforts the situation at universities was not yet desirable and there should be a tendency towards improving the quality of work.

He said one of the most important needs of the country was to make the universities Islamic and that there must be planning for lecturers and students in order to make the universities Islamic. [passage omitted]

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Iran: Ansar-e Hezbollah Statement Cited

NC2405091096 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 12 May 96 p 3

["Excerpts" of a statement by the Ansar-e Hezbollah Group on recent incidents at Amir Kabir Industrial University; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] 1. Following an announcement by the Islamic Society of Amir Kabir University mentioned in a speech by Hoseyn Haj Faraj Dabbagh (Sorush), some student brother members of Ansar-e Hezbollah—mostly graduates of the university—held a friendly meeting with brothers of the Islamic Society and expressed their views on the negative feelings of the selfless, revolutionary, and hezbollahi strata toward this speech. The Ansar-e Hezbollah members left the university after their sincere discussion. Despite the positive attitude of our brothers the unjust statement by the Islamic Society condemning the assault on a Tehran movie theater included various insults, which, apart from being surprising, showed the intentions of the brothers in the Islamic Society to go on with the speech and ignore public opinion and the outcome of the joint meeting held at the Society. Unfortunately, this statement distorted the topics discussed at the meeting, which was held on 8 May. Speaking at the university mosque, the secretary of the Islamic Society tried to attribute indecent and instigatory remarks to Ansar-e Hezbollah. Despite this unfriendly and spiteful approach, in a second peaceful attempt by the Ansar-e Hezbollah brothers, continuing their public programs of enjoining virtue and prohibiting vice, appearing on various levels in Tehran and in other cities, numerous hezbollahi brothers and sisters participated in the march toward the cultural center of the Islamic Publicity Organization. The march was led by disabled brothers. Chanting Islamic slogans condemning the cultural onslaught and liberalist and secularist movements, the Ansar-e Hezbollah members gathered in front of the offices of the Islamic Society and the university mosque. One of the brothers, lauding the sacred and oppressed martyrs of the university, praised the devotion of some martyrs (by stating their names) and mentioned the need for devotion by march participants in defending values gained through blood shed in the revolution. They condemned the futile adventurism of people who— instead of being thankful for the selflessness and devotion of the martyrs, honoring values, and continuing in their path—feed on support for liberalism and antivalues in their sick minds. They expressed regret and warned them against this behavior. Later the hezbollahi brothers and sisters calmly left the scene chanting in unison: "Where are you, o divine martyrs...?" There were no incidents and they continued to march toward the cultural center.

2. SALAM on 9 May published a statement by the brothers of Amir Kabir University's Islamic Council. Very surprisingly, it aimed immoral and unfit comments at the brothers and sisters who gathered in front of the university on 8 May.

The questions that arise are: How can the effort to describe Ansar-e Hezbollah as a minigroup be justified? It is an illogical stance. How can political insults solve any problem? What does the word minigroup mean? Have our people forgotten that this word is used to describe subversive and monafeqin [hypocritical—pejorative term used to describe the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization] groups? Is it this organization, being directed backstage by elements who have a record of working for the monafeqin, that is more similar to a minigroup? Or is it the people who have sacrificed everything they had and all their activities, who are open for the public to see, and who have nothing to hide?

Was the peaceful presence of a coordinated group of combatant and selfless basiji hezbollahi brothers and sisters—whose slogans and presence were akin to those at a memorial ceremony—and their words reflecting the decisive duty of enjoining virtue and prohibiting vice tantamount to trampling on the sanctities of the university and the academicians?!

—Is there no lesson to be learned from the groups that claim to be Islamic without implementing the teachings of his eminence the imam, may his soul be sanctified, but that have turned into mercenaries for foreigners? Despite their claims they have a black record of counter-revolutionary behavior, the assassination of great 'ulema of the Islamic movement, such as Ayatollah Rabbani-Shirazi, and the poisoning of Ayatollah Rabbani-Amlashi. They actively cooperated with assassination squads and the bands of terror that killed Mehdi Hashemi, cooperated and had links with politically disgraced and bankrupt elements, and fed on the rotten ideas of such elements. What ills has such behavior healed for some people to condemn the defenders of values and pile on pressure by referring to the presence of these defenders on the revolution scene as the presence of a minigroup?!

—On the pretext of condemning a mistake (in the unwanted assault on a movie theater, responsibility for which was immediately claimed by the [Ansar-e Hezbollah] brothers in full sincerity; an explanation and comments on which will be published in a statement) and magnifying this incident, how can they so easily ignore the numerous activities, marches, and demonstrations that played a major role in preventing the destructive process? What about rectifying the behavior of many of the executive institutions and officials of the

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

country? What about fulfilling the canonical and lawful duties of popular marches? And what about enjoining virtue and prohibiting vice? Why are all those who strive to do good and shun evil so unjustly made the targets of insults?

—Is calling on those who made the imam of the ummah suffer and who placed the gradual transmutation of the revolution on their agenda, who opened up the arsenals to the sworn enemies of Islam, and who were responsible for the blood shed by the oppressed martyrs of Kordestan, because of their idiotic behavior in Eng. Bazargan's government (and, according to Martyr Motahhari, the government of idiots), the behavior that the late imam, who so fervently supported martyrdom, expected of Islamic societies? Have the imam's explicit remarks that the monafeqin are the dear children of Eng. Bazargan been forgotten?

—Is having contacts and holding official meetings with the heads of the Freedom Movement in the university the Islamic mission of the Islamic Council?

—Is the harassing of the hard-working guards of the university by the so-called Islamic Council and the breaking down of the door of the university amphitheater to hold a meeting of notorious elements of the Freedom Movement not tantamount to breaching the sanctity of the university?

Is the lack of elections and moves to prevent people who have defended the revolution and the country from becoming candidates not tantamount to choosing oligarchy? And is the creation of an atmosphere of suppression and repression at the university, such that no one can express himself, not oligarchy and narrowmindedness?

Frankly, a debate in the presence of all the brother and sister students and with the participation of the interested parties will clarify things. Here the Ansar-e Hezbollah announces its readiness to participate in the debate with the brothers of the Islamic Council.

The statement by the Islamic Council of Amir Kabir Industrial University published only in SALAM on 9 May said:

Again the minigroup known as Ansar has trampled on the country's laws and entered the university and, by repeating old methods (accusations and threats), trampled on the sanctity of the university and the academicians.

More deplorable than the record of this minigroup and its performance, its trampling on individual and social rights, its wanting chaos, and its breaching of sanctities, coupled with threats and the intimidation of individuals, is the meaningless silence by the officials in charge of safeguarding security and the so-called defenders of law.

The statement warns the Islamic Society of Amir Kabir University:

We warn officials that if they do not carry out their definite duty to the full the students and academicians will rise to defend the university's sanctity. This will be a scourge on all those who act and think only of their own interests.

Iran: Rafiqdust Sees 'Mysterious Hands' Behind Allegations

LD2305195696 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 18 May 96 p 4

[Economic Page: "Interview with Rafiqdust"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Economics Desk: This is the text of our correspondent's interview with Mohsen Rafiqdust [head of the Mostaz'afin Foundation — the Foundation for the Oppressed]: [passage omitted on opening of the Mashhad-Sarakhs railway link, general questions on production and economic projects]

[Question] Recently criticisms have been made in certain publications concerning you personally and the performance of the Mostaz'afin Foundation. What have you to say about them?

[Rafiqdust] In my view publications are the link between the people and the officials; the open eyes and ears of the society. They must report any shortcomings or defects wherever they find them. Criticism helps to eliminate problems and to reform the business of the community. But what must be observed in this is that publishers must investigate any report that they receive and listen to the replies given by the relevant organs and not propagate falsehoods unreasonably. Our people are aware that there is a weekly publication [reference to PAYAM-E DANESHJU, students' magazine] which is engaged in propagating lies, pointing the finger of accusation and slandering and has nothing else to say. If that publication is truthful, then why does it not get in touch before publishing to learn about the truth or otherwise of its reports? Is it commensurate with Islamic principles to write about an issue without asking any questions or investigating and thus shame someone or some organ? That particular publication, before being closed, published several accusations against me personally and against the foundation, as a result of which I took it to court. The publisher could not explain any of the accusations in court. For example it had written that the Pakhsh-e Now Company belonged to my wife's father and brother — whereas it totally belonged to the foundation and has nothing to do with

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

my in-laws at all. What the publication had written was a total lie. At the hearing, the publisher, instead of explaining his accusation, declared: Several of Mr. Rafiqdust's relatives are employed by the foundation!! He must be asked whether I had ever claimed that none of my relatives worked there. Is it illegal for them to be employed there? The foundation personnel number more than 50,000. So, some of my relatives may be employed there. On some occasions I invite certain people to come and work there because of my knowledge of them. That is no offense and not against the law.

On another occasion, that publication claimed that the foundation has invested in the Hemmat School whereas that school has nothing to do with the foundation and I, myself, have no position there either. As for this accusation, again the publisher had nothing to say at the hearing. Although he was not even found innocent as far as those accusations were concerned, the jury, in order to give that person an opportunity to reform himself, declared that there was no malice in publishing them and therefore voted to acquit him.

[Question] In recent issues of the same magazine there have been more articles about the foundation and yourself. Would you comment on those as well?

[Rafiqdust] A recent issue writes that my brother-in-law's brother has purchased a property from the foundation at a discount, which is not true. My brother-in-law's brother is called 'Ali Akbar Hoseyni known as Salehi, but the person who has purchased property from the foundation is called Dr. 'Ali Akbar Sadeqi and he is a lecturer at the Shahid Beheshti University. He had been living in that property for quite some time and already owned one-fifth of it. The courts recommend the rest of such a property be sold to the person who owns one-fifth of it. That is why the property was sold to that person according to foundation regulations and subject to the usual discounts. No offense has been committed because I have the right to give discounts whenever I deem it advisable to do so. In that case no offense was committed.

I regret that that publication does nothing but lie and slander. This respected university lecturer owned one-fifth of the property. Instead of paying him for his share of the property, the foundation created suitable conditions through offering the usual and normal discounts so that he could purchase the property.

[Question] In some of its articles, the publication quotes someone who used to work for the foundation. What do you say to that?

[Rafiqdust] There used to be someone who was employed by the foundation who was arrested on ethical and financial charges. About 15 million tumans [tuman = 10 rials] of the amounts embezzled by him were recovered and returned to the foundation coffers and he was expelled. The same publication, without proper investigation and without studying his case to find out why he had been arrested, has published unsubstantiated material quoting him.

[Question] Have you filed a complaint?

[Rafiqdust] Yes, we have complained against this person and this publication to the judiciary, on the grounds that they have both been involved in spreading false rumors. The fact that every week this publication continues to publish unfounded allegations against the foundation is a proof that there are some mysterious hands behind the whole affair, and these have to be investigated. The publication of these allegations is not accidental, and it is clear that the individuals responsible for this publication are intent on using every possible mean and every available pretext in order to mobilize public opinion against the foundation.

But, who do they think is going to suffer because of these allegations? I myself am not an obscure person. My background both before and after the revolution is clear for our people and officials alike. People's opinions and views cannot be altered through the publication of these false allegations. Of course, it is possible that the minds of the youth, who might be unaware of the background of individuals, may be affected for a while. But this will only be temporary. How do these gentlemen intend to explain things to people once the truth becomes clear for all? Winter will eventually end but the face of coal will always be black [Persian proverb]. In my opinion, the fate of the managers of this publication should be no better than that of the Monafeqin [outlawed Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization].

Of course, other publications too occasionally criticize the performance of the foundation. However, since they are not after revenge, they normally come to us with their questions and publish their material only after hearing our replies. Our question is that why this publication has not been prepared to contact the foundation even once before publishing its articles? What is their motive for continuously searching for individuals who may be persuaded to say things against the foundation?

At present, I have in my possession a letter from a war veteran, which I will publish when necessary. [According to this letter] Some staff working for this publication have contacted the said war veteran in a bid

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

to persuade him to criticize the foundation. However, he told them: "What should I say when I have absolutely no problem with the foundation?" This brother veteran has come to me to say that he is being pressurized to say things against the foundation. When a publication uses this method for gathering news and information, then it can be clear that its reports cannot enjoy any validity whatsoever! [passage omitted]

Iran: Khamene'i Says Universities 'Not Islamic'

LD2305220196 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In a meeting with the minister and officials of the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education and the heads of centers for research and higher education, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i said that particular consideration must be given to to the educational and organizational aspects of universities.

He said: Today, our universities are not Islamic and they must become Islamic. Therefore a fundamental, caring, strategic, well planned, and comprehensive development is both vital and unavoidable.

Iran: Paper Defends Meeting With Ansar-e Hezbollah Members

LD2305191896 Tehran AKHBAR in Persian 19 May 96 p 2

[From the "Paper's View" column: "The Night's Incident"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A group of Ansar-e Hezbollah [Upholders of Hezbollah] were the guest of AKHBAR on Friday [16 May] night. They had some questions to ask AKHBAR and they also had some friendly complaints about AKHBAR.

It is an indisputable right of all readers to ask questions which aim at the rapprochement of viewpoints. Why not have such meetings to resolve points of difference?

The Friday night meeting was an exception from the point of view of those working for AKHBAR, because no newspaper could have cultural dynamism without being aware of the thinking of its readers and without being familiar with public opinion.

The guests were surprised with the honesty that AKHBAR has reported recent social developments, and the fact that AKHBAR — which does not have any other aim but to fulfill its journalistic mission and considers itself as one of the children of the revolution and a cultural guardian of the Islamic system — has emphasized this belief through its performance in the past few months.

AKHBAR has invited all factions to express their viewpoints in order to inform the public within the framework of the high interests of revolution, the system and the boundary that the great leader of revolution has termed the "red line".

AKHBAR believes that political transparency increases the trust of the citizens and distinguishes between the good and the bad.

AKHBAR believes that events on the borders of the Islamic Republic of Iran have sinister aims and that the nation must be informed about these and that, in short, political apathy is damaging.

However, at the same time, boundaries must be respected and the difficult task of journalism and informing carried out.

AKHBAR believes that the Friday night meeting was positive and constructive; and it hopes that all political groups come forward to explain their points of views in order to prevent rumor-mongering and interpretations.

Iran: AKHBAR To Appear in Reduced Form Owing to 'Paper Shortage'

LD2205174896 Tehran SALAM in Persian 20 May 96 p 2

[Unattributed Report: "Daily AKHBAR to be published in two pages only"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] As from this morning (Monday) the daily AKHBAR is published in two pages only. Ahmad Safa'i-Far, editor of the daily, said yesterday: The measure was taken because of paper shortage; and the daily is on the threshold of closing down, unless it receives more paper from the Islamic Guidance Ministry at a special subsidized price. [passage omitted describing the importance of the daily]

In this same connection Mr. Ash'ari, press deputy of the Islamic Guidance Ministry, told our correspondent yesterday: Annual paper allocation of the press is fixed in the new year, and if we allocate more paper to the daily AKHBAR, we would have to reduce the allocation of another daily. [passage omitted on details of paper allocation]

It is worth mentioning that yesterday the daily AKHBAR, in a statement, announced a current account number — 103894 — in the Saman branch of Mellat Bank. The daily asked its readers to help their favorite paper by donating money through the said account.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Iran: Daily Explains Reduced Length Due to Paper Shortage

LD2205171096 Tehran AKHBAR in Persian 19 May 96 p2

[Unattributed editorial entitled: "Bitter Moments Have Arrived"]

[FBIS Translated Text] That which should never have happened has happened despite all our efforts, and all that we have endured in terms of problems and difficulties. We have published 'AKHBAR' in four pages today and tomorrow it will be only two pages long.

For nearly a year now we have been waiting and we have endured a great deal of distress and anxiety. We have gone to the edge of closure, but we have tried to keep our hope alive, that the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance would deliver the newspaper's quota of paper.

We have written about the crisis on several occasions — the crisis brought about by the shortage of paper — in order to convince officials that we need the delivery of paper.

We have put behind us nearly a year of journalism, conducted in the framework of distress and anxiety, and our colleagues are well aware what this kind of journalism feels like. The size of our debt has reached an astronomical figure.

In order to survive and exist, the only solution has been to reduce the number of pages. No moment could be more painful than this one for the journalists and reporters of 'AKHBAR.' We extend our apologies to our readers and we will try to devote tomorrow's two pages entirely to the people's complaints, requests, and wishes.

We ask God for endurance and patience and we will continue to try to inform and serve our compatriots in the limited space at our disposal.

Iran: Officials Refuse To Hand Over AKHBAR's Newsprint Allocation

LD2305171696 Tehran AKHBAR in Persian 20 May 96 p 2

[Report on readers' questions about AKHBAR: "You and AKHBAR"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted]

[Question] Why does the government not support you?

[AKHBAR] It has been acknowledged by our friends, colleagues and readers that the daily AKHBAR has always remained independent and impartial. We have done our upmost not to become a mouthpiece for a specific current or taste. It seems that there are some people who dislike this impartiality. The government officials refuse to hand over the daily's newsprint allocation to which it is legally entitled. It seems as if they don't believe the daily's editors-in- chief about the severe [financial] difficulties facing the daily.

At the same time there are other officials who have never denied their support for us. We hope that the press officials in the Ministry of [Islamic] Guidance will recognize our problem.

[Question] How long will this procedure continue?

[AKHBAR] We have decided to carry on as long as we can and to remain loyal to our readers even if we have to publish the paper in a smaller size. We want to continue working as long as possible.

[Question] How can we help?

[AKHBAR] This is very important and a considerable number of readers have offered to help. This shows the loyalty of readers. We hope they don't cut their ties with us. This relationship is very important to us. We have also published a bank account number to receive your financial support. We express gratitude to all of you.

Iran: Need for Journalists' Union Described

NC2405113796 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 11 May 96 pp 1, 16

[Editorial by Bizhan Moqaddam: "A Roof for Unanimity"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an opinion poll for journalists, all of those who participated consider the existence of an organization that will solve union, legal, and financial problems and will boost the spirit of cooperation and will act as a venue for exchanging views and opinions, for safeguarding the dignity of journalists, and for preventing people who don't belong in the profession from practicing the profession to be necessary. Why then is it that no efforts are being made in this direction?

The truth is that basically speaking because of the lack of stability, because of the many changes in the family of journalists, and because of their belief in cultural activities and lofty values the journalists, who are the mouthpiece of all the strata and other unions, ignore their own union and legal needs. And this is the reason for the absence of such an organization in the post-Islamic Revolution period. The formation of such an organization does not necessarily mean that it will be involved in bargaining over wages and so on. Once it is formed, it will be able to include many problems on its agenda.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Today, since this idea is nearing "fruition", it is necessary to explain some points in a bid to help better organize such a body:

1. The success of the society will be contingent on its independence. In other words, it should depend on the committed members of the press society, and the government should also recognize the vocational independence of the journalists and not spare any efforts to support them in achieving their rights.

2. The children of the revolution, who form a considerable portion of the press family, should come forward because some people are lying in ambush, waiting to take up the leadership of such an organization and to build a bastion against the revolution, from which they will aim their poisonous arrows at the values of the system at sensitive and decisive junctures.

3. During his sincere and open meeting with the press officials, the esteemed leader of the Islamic Revolution referred to three groups—the forces that believe in the revolution, those who are involved in specialized journalism, and the spiteful.

On the basis of this division, we believe that the Society of Journalists is not a place for the spiteful and for those who have not been prepared—even out of decency—to bow to the blessings of the revolution and the values that have been gained with the movement of the late Imam, with the help of the committed clergy, and by the pure blood that has been shed.

Those who ridicule the values of the revolution and are swimming against the current of the people, should not expect their presence in the Society of Journalists to be recognized.

4. The society should be based on Islam and the revolution. It should consider itself to be a child of the revolution and the protector of those values that all the freedom-loving and committed people of the pen are after and for the sake of which people have been martyred. The society should consider itself to be the protector of the boundaries of the revolution and of the basic and legal rights of the press and not resort to misleading allegations, pretending to be more Catholic than the pope, and give people on the other side of the borders any pretexts.

5. Probably one of the basic reasons why such an organization has not yet been formed is the differences of taste and the political and factional approaches at various junctures during the revolution.

But today we believe that the differences of taste and differences of approach on political, economic, and other issues should not prevent such a gathering. The importance is the concordance of views of those who will participate in this gathering on "principles" such as the revolution, Islam, the leadership, and the Constitution.

Thus, from this angle, the society should not be considered a venue for the settling of political accounts and a place for factional approaches, but a roof under which sincerity, unanimity, unity, and aspirations will be fulfilled.

Iran: Paper Views Measures To Eradicate Poverty, Tax Issue

LD2205184396 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 19 May 96 p2

[Unattributed Commentary entitled: "Eradication of Poverty: Shake up Tax, Administration System"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Budget and Planning Organization has prepared the draft of a bill on the eradication of poverty. Though one cannot but welcome the move, there are certain points that the Majles should bear in mind while studying the bill.

According to the figures stated by the head of the Budget and Planning Organization, Hamid Mirzadeh, 17 percent of Iranian citizens live below the poverty line. But they haven't told us what the poverty line is. A certain salary for a family of four should be set, and under that salary a family can be considered to be living in poverty.

First of all, definition of poverty and the poverty line should be based on a realistic approach taking into account real figures. While studying the bill, the Majles should find out the exact number of people living below the poverty line.

In order to determine the poverty line, various Majles committees, especially those dealing with health, housing, education, and food should play an active role.

As President Rafsanjani announced yesterday [18 May], one of the main sources of bringing about the eradication of poverty will be collecting taxes from the rich.

The plan will not be effective unless we revamp our tax system. At present the income of the private sector is not properly scrutinized because our tax system is ill. Speculators make billions of rials while they are not accountable.

While the private sector's income touches astronomical figures, the amount of tax this sector pays is relatively negligible. The government, however, deducts taxes from the salaries of government employees, some of whom would be below the poverty line once a line has been established.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

If the administrative system is corrupt, the best tax system will not improve the situation. Normally, we set up an organization to look after a plan, while in practice the same organization eats up the funds, partly in operating costs and partly in corrupt practices. We do not need another bureaucracy to overlook the poverty eradication plan.

However, a comprehensive tax system is not enough in itself to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor. What is required is a shake-up in the administrative system which will handle the tax system.

Iran: Prayer Headquarters Officials Meet With IRNA's Verdinezhad

LD2305204896 Tehran IRAN in Persian 20 May 96 p 2

[Headline: "Officials in Charge of Headquarters for Performing Congregational Prayers meet at IRNA"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The seventh gathering of the Headquarters [HQ] for Holding of Prayers met in the presence of the representative of the Guardian of the Jurisconsult and the head of the HQ at the Islamic Republic News Agency yesterday.

At the meeting, Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Mohsen Qara'ati, said that the sixth national conference of the organization is approaching and that organizations, institutions and executive establishments should try harder for a fruitful conference.

Later at the meeting, the general manager of the News Agency reported on the News Agency's activities in reviving and holding prayers. He said: one of the News Agency's programs is to send a "prayer time" message and break the broadcast of messages on its external network at the time of the [daily] prayers.

Fereaydun Verdinezhad also said: the News Agency and the IRAN daily are prepared to put their news capacity at the disposal of the HQ and relay events about the organization.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Qara'ati praised the News Agency for its practices, particularly the break in the broadcasting of messages on its external network.

Several organizations and institutions, including the judiciary, and the Headquarters for the Holding of Prayers from Tehran and Isfehan reported their activities to meeting.

The meeting ended with a mass prayer led by Hojjat ol-Eslam Qara'ati who discussed the month of Moharram and the role of prayer in safeguarding Islam and the 'Ashura campaign [by the third Shiite Imam].

Pakistan

Pakistan: Islamabad Reports Situation in Kashmir on Polling Day

BK2305141796 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In occupied Kashmir, polling drama was staged today for Baramula [and], Anantnag-Islamabad constituencies amid a crippling strike observed, at the call of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, against the farcical and fraudulent polls completely boycotted by the Kashmiri people. Intense tension prevailed at the poll venues due to the menacing presence of Indian troops everywhere threatening the people with dire consequences, if they stayed away from the polling. Report of our special correspondent, Ghulam Nabi Khayal, from New Delhi.

[Begin Khayal recording] In Kashmir valley, where elections to two parliamentary seats were scheduled for today, a total boycott of the polls gave a deserted took to the entire valley inhabited by 5 million people. The day was observed as black day in protest against the holding of elections in Anantnag and Baramula constituencies. Requesting anonymity, a senior official told this correspondent from Srinagar that not more than 2 percent votes could have been polled despite the fact that there were threatenings by the forces and gun-toting progovernment candidates. A Delhi-based newspaper PIONEER also said today that progovernment militants contesting the elections have the backing of the Indian Army. A total strike being observed against elections also by the state government employees entered into the 11th day today. Ghulam Nabi Khayal, PTV News, New Delhi. [end recording]

PTV correspondent, Khaleda Mazhar, talked to the All Parties Hurriyat Conference leader, Professor Abdul Ghani Bhatt in Srinagar on today's situation in the valley.

[Begin recording] [Mazhar] Can you tell me something about what happened today when the polling started today in Kashmir?

[Bhatt] Voluntary participation of the people in the process is impossible, inconceivable. But the armed forces forcibly dragged people out of their houses goaded them to the polling booths. And in the meanwhile, the people resisted (?completely) and raised slogans in favor of azadi [independence] and against Indian domination of Jammu and Kashmir. But, then you know, it is a battle between the bullet and the people's will. Bullets are very hard and very cruel. Sometimes, we have to give in in the larger interest and they have

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

their rigged elections unabashedly. This is the situation here.

[Mazhar] Were there any clashes today?

[Bhatt] Yeah, there were clashes in Sopor. Two people are reported to have been martyred and lot many have been beaten up severely in other towns and villages. [end recording]

Reports from Kupwara said that loud sounds of explosions were heard from areas of Kupwara District last night and this morning. The local police said they had heard the explosions but, did not know as to what had happened. According to CNN, Indian police have clashed with demonstrators protesting against elections in the Jammu and Kashmir state.

Pakistan: Black Day Observed, Resolution Passed Against Kashmir Polls

BK2305113496 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Reports from occupied Kashmir say the engineered polling began in Baramula and Anantnag-Islamabad this morning. Though the military authorities are forcing the people to go for polls, there seems to be a complete boycott of the sham elections in the held territory. As reported earlier, the life remained crippled due to a complete general strike in the valley today against the farcical elections.

Black Day is being observed in Azad Kashmir and Pakistan to protest against these elections. Various human rights organizations and political parties have arranged demonstrations, rallies, and meetings in big and small cities and towns on this occasion. In Islamabad, members of National Assembly from both sides of the house wore black arm bands during session today in solidarity with the people of occupied Kashmir. The house passed a unanimous resolution expressing complete support of the people of Pakistan for their Kashmir brethren on rejection of fraudulent polls being staged by India in the held territory. The resolution was moved by the deputy leader of the opposition in concurrence with the treasury benches. It urged the international community, the UN Secretary General, and permanent of the UN Security Council to help implement the world body resolution on Kashmir.

Pakistan: Sikandar Elected AJK President; Plea To Halt Polls Rejected

BK2405064296 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 23 May 96 pp 1, 10

[Report by Javed Jaidi]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — Sardar Sikandar Hayat Khan was re-elected as president of Azad Jammu and Kashmir [AJK] Wednesday after the state High Court [HC] rejected an opposition plea to stop the polls.

AJK opposition parties had left the field open for Sikandar and boycotted the elections, protesting against his re-election from the same assembly which had voted him to the post five year ago.

Moreover, they had contended that since the Legislative Assembly was nearing the end of its term, it lacked the moral and political authority to elect the new president who should have been elected by the newly seated assembly after June 30.

They then decided to wage a legal battle against the elections, but the High Court allowed the election to proceed, turning down a petition by PPP's [Pakistan People's Party] Ishaq Zafar, a former speaker of the Legislative Assembly, that the house was not competent to elect a president as its term was about to end. .

The full bench comprising Chief Justice Khawaja Mohammad Saeed, Mr Justice Syed Manzoor Hussain Gillani, Mr. Justice Chaudhary Taj Mohammad, and Mr Justice Mohammad Siddique Farooqi gave a unanimous decision in favor of holding the elections.

The AJK opposition had also campaigned the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly by imposition of Article 56 by the Federal Government till Tuesday, but Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto had refused to interfere in AJK affairs so as not to hurt the freedom movement across the borders.

After winning the legal battle, Sardar Sikandar reached the assembly building in Muzaffarabad, leading a vehicular procession of his supporters.

He obtained 36 votes out of a total of 55. Two stand-by candidates, Ali Khan Chughtai and Chaudhary Abdul Aziz had withdrawn their names from the contest in the morning hours.

Opposition members stayed away from the election and Sultan Mahmood, PPP president in AJK, said his party's seven deputies had resigned from the assembly to protest against the presidential elections.

Sultan Mahmood told a press conference in Islamabad that his party would fully participate in the general

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

elections to the state Legislative Assembly and "will win with a thumping majority." He said that after getting a majority in the house, his party would be able to constitutionally oust Sikandar Hayat.

Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan, who was the first to vote for Sikandar Hayat Khan in the presidential elections, hailed the decision of the AJK High Court and said that the decision had boosted the image of the judiciary. He praised the Federal Government for "keeping aloof from AJK affairs" and said that this had "saved us from a big collective loss." He also maintained that he would not adopt a "confrontationist policy" against the Federal Government. To a question, he said that any party with a majority in the AJK Legislative Assembly could remove the president. To a question about the chances of rigging in the general elections, Qayyum said that after recent assurances by the Federal Government, "there were only remote chances of rigging in the elections."

Pakistan: Leghari Solicits PRC Support on Kashmir

BK2405064196 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has said that both China and Pakistan want peace in the world and they are working for this purpose.

Talking to a Chinese journalist delegation in Islamabad yesterday, he said both the countries have commonality of views on important international issues and support each other at the international fora. He thanked the Chinese leadership for their consistent support to Pakistan for a peaceful and negotiated settlement of Kashmir problem for which Pakistan wants to have a meaningful dialogue with India. He said the farcical elections in held Kashmir could not be a substitute for plebiscite under the United Nations resolution.

The leader of the Chinese delegation, Mr. Zhao Huaili, thanked the government for the hospitality and said he would take back warm feelings of friendship from the people of Pakistan to China.

The leader of an 11-member parliamentary delegation of China, Mr. Sun Puling, has said China fully supports Pakistan's principled stand on Kashmir and hoped that the issue would be resolved peacefully according to the United Nations resolutions.

Talking to newsmen before departure for Beijing in Karachi last night after an eight-day visit to Pakistanm he said Pakistan and China enjoy eternal relations and hoped that these would be further strengthened. He also appreciated Pakistan's support to China in connection with the issue of human rights.

Pakistan: Leghari Reluctant To Sign Presidential Reference

BK2405060696 Islamabad THE NATION in English 23 May 96 pp 1, 13

[Report by THE NATION correspondent]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — President Farooq Leghari has shown his reluctance to sign the reference sent back by the Supreme Court [SC] on the ground that the reference does not bear his (president's) signatures, highly-placed sources confided to THE NATION.

It may be mentioned that on the very first evening when the reference was filed (May 16) the presidency leaked to the press that although the reference had been filed in the name of the president, it (presidency) has nothing to do with it. This indicates that President Leghari's perception is in sharp variance with the Federal Government over the March 20 verdict of the apex court regarding appointment of judges to the superior judiciary. Against this backdrop, legal experts see a new cooperation arising between the president and the Supreme Court trying to limit the interference of the prime minister at least in matters related to the appointment and transfer in the superior judiciary. Some of them are of the view that even in case the president agrees to sign the reference it is unlikely that he signs it (reference) in its original form.

In the aforementioned reference, the government has raised some very "important" questions with its own point of view. One such question is No. 6 which reads "An acting chief justice is not a consultee as envisaged by the relevant Articles of the Constitution and, therefore, mandatory constitutional requirement of consultation is not fulfilled by consulting an acting chief justice except in case the permanent chief justice concerned is unable to resume his functions within ninety days from the date of commencement of his sick leave because of his continuous sickness".

As for the controversy sparked off with the return of the reference by the registrar of the Supreme Court for the want of the signatures of the president there are divergent legal opinions. While some believe that no presidential reference could be entertained by the Supreme Court unless signed by the president himself, others say that president's signatures are merely a technicality as under the Rules of Business authenticity of the instrument in the name of the president has to be made by the concerned secretary.

The experts from the latter school of thought substantiate their viewpoint by referring to a reported case of 1994 of the disqualification of one Muqeem Khoso — a person debarred from contesting elections about which

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

a reference was made to the disqualification tribunal. The controversy arose before the SC bench comprising Justice Ajmal Mian and Justice Sajjad Ali Shah as to whether the presidential reference was in order for its having been signed by the principal secretary to the president and not the president himself. The objection was overruled by the bench on the ground that the principal secretary of the president was authorized to file the reference on behalf of the president and that presumption of regularity is attached to all official acts.

On the other hand those who believe that it is mandatory for the president to put his signatures on any reference he sends to the Supreme Court believe that such an order of the registrar (about returning the reference) is open to appeal to a Supreme Court judge in chamber as provided in order V Rule 3 of Pakistan Supreme Court Rules under which "if the government has any grievance against the proper course for it is to file an appeal to the judge in chamber". They are of the view that instead of adopting the proper course the government decided to undermine the judiciary through public statements.

But all of them unanimously hold that the Executive as well as the Supreme Court should have resolved their differences in a better way than taking the issue to the press.

Pakistan: Official Refutes U.S. Allegations on Iranian Terrorism

LD2305215796 Tehran IRNA in English 2124 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Islamabad, May 23, IRNA — "Pakistan enjoys good relations with Iran and it has no [word indistinct] of the involvement of Islamic Republic of Iran in terrorism, a foreign office spokesman said here Thursday.

He was responding to a question, at his weekly press briefing, on the allegation by the U.S. secretary of state against Iran.

"We do have very good relations with Iran, it is a close and brotherly country of Pakistan." [passage omitted]

The Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Shaikh, earlier, to a question about the recent rappraochment between Kabul government led by President Borhanoddin Rabbani and Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] headed by Golboddin Hekmatyar, refered to press reports suggesting that the four party opposition alliance, supreme coordination council, have rejected the agreement reached between the two Afghan leaders.

Hezb-e Eslami is part of the Supreme Coordination Council, which also contains the National Liberation Front of Sebghatollah Mojadeddi, National Islamic Movement of North Afghanistan headed by General 'Abdorrashid Dostam and the Hezb-e Wahdat [Unity Party] faction led by Karim Khalili.

Pakistan: Foreign Secretary Comments on Talks With Russian Officials

BK2305135296 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Russia has requested that Pakistan use its good offices with Taleban to secure the release of a Russian plane crew that has been detained by the student militia since last year. This was stated by the foreign secretary, Mr. Najmuddin Sheikh, while briefing newsmen in Islamabad this afternoon. He said Moscow understands that Pakistan does not have any favorites in Afghanistan and it seeks to have good ties with all Afghan factions, including Taleban; but he said the degree to which we can influence Taleban is limited. He said his two-day talks with Russian officials, on 16th and 17th of this month, were part of an exchange of views between the two countries at different levels.

[Begin Sheikh recording] On the bilateral front, we discussed Afghanistan. On the regional front, if I may put it this way, we discussed Afghanistan, we discussed Tajikistan, and we discussed the relations both Pakistan and Russia have with the countries of Central Asia. On Afghanistan, the Russian side was in agreement with our view that peace and stability could only be restored by the Afghans getting together and arriving at some solution, but that this solution had to be agreed upon by the Afghans themselves. [end recording]

Pakistan: U.S. 'Moral High Ground' on Nuclear Matters Questioned

BK2105113196 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 20 May 96 p 6

[Editorial: "Beijing's Principled Stand"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The reassertion by the Chinese Foreign Office of Beijing's clear-cut position on nuclear technology transfers should be sufficient to allay Washington's concern on this score. Prompted by a State Department spokesman's oblique reference recently to a new Sino-US understanding on Beijing's future cooperation with Pakistan and other countries in the nuclear field the Chinese statement makes it clear that being a responsible world power China "will not provide assistance to unsafeguarded nuclear facilities" and that it "stands for strengthening of nonproliferation regime..." The current Sino-US standoff centres around a host of irritants that have lately clouded ties between Washington and Beijing. The "ring magnets" row the harassment of pro-democracy activists the alleged violation

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

by Beijing of a Sino- US intellectual property accord the simmering hostility in the wake of a recent eyeball-to-eyeball military confrontation in the Taiwanese Strait have all coalesced to generate a semblance of the Cold War freeze. The unveiling by Washington of tough trade sanctions against Beijing for alleged software and music piracy and the retaliatory measures taken by the latter have imparted a new dimension to the gathering showdown.

China is a prominent signatory to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty [NPT] and it stands firmly committed to its aims and objectives. As implied by the Chinese Foreign Office spokesman China would be the last country in the world to do anything that could be construed as overstepping the NPT parameters. Beijing has consistently maintained, since the "ring magnets" story first appeared in a Washington Times issue, that it has not violated any provision of the NPT.

Islamabad has never denied being engaged in peaceful nuclear activities to make up for the shortfall in its power generation. And the ring magnets are an essential component of a nuclear reactor. The Chinese shipment cannot therefore be viewed necessarily as an "unsafeguarded nuclear technology transfer." It appears that the ambiguity between the two types of nuclear activity has been deliberately whipped up to put both Beijing and Islamabad on the mat. The Chinese annoyance with the American stance is thus perfectly natural. Earlier, it was the M-11 issue that had kicked up a big diplomatic row, though the charge was quietly dropped later on account of "insufficient evidence". On the other hand, it has now been established by declassified intelligence data that Washington itself has been directly or indirectly involved in providing assistance to India's nuclear bomb production programme.

Ironically, while screws were being turned on Pakistan under Pressler sanctions in the early 1990s (after the Afghan war had achieved its goal), Washington was already secretly ferrying nuclear-related assistance to New Delhi! This factor alone will be sufficient to disqualify Washington for the moral high ground it claims in nuclear matters. Viewed in a global perspective, it may not prove a useful policy for Washington to push the Chinese to the wall.

Pakistan: IMF Links $1.5 Million Loan to 'Conditions'

BK2305070196 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 22 May 96 pp 1, 2

[Report by Munir Ahmed from Lahore and Zamir Haider from Islamabad]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has linked the release of $1,500 million loans from Extended Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAPF) and Extended Fund Facility (EFF) — the agreements which had been signed by the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] government with IMF two years back — to compliance with its conditions, which remains an arduous tangle for the government.

"IMF wants us to reduce the ratio of tariff from 65 per cent to 55 per cent besides bringing down the budgetary deficit from six per cent to four per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP)", official sources said.

The government will have to levy Rs [rupees] 40,000 million taxes if it wants to lower the budgetary deficit to four per cent of the GDP.

Meanwhile, an IMF delegation is busy holding talks with the government on budgetary matters. "This time, the budget will be very difficult because the government has no option except to strike a deal with the IMF", sources said.

The federal government is likely to present a budget for the year 1996-97 on June 13, 1996. Makhdoom Shahabuddin, the state minister for finance will present the budget in the National Assembly.

"We will finalize a draft of the budget keeping in view the prevailing, political situation", a PPP source said, adding that the IMF wanted the government to crush the business community, which contributed a lot to the national exchequer.

It is learnt that the IMF had agreed last year that $1,500 million would be given to Pakistan during the year 1995-96 at a mark-up rate of five percent. But the failure of the government in implementing the IMF conditionalities led to suspension of both agreements mentioned above.

Finance Ministry sources said on Tuesday that the government was holding talks with the IMF officials to get the suspended agreements restored.

"They (IMF) have agreed in principle, but we will have to pay a five percent mark-up on the $1,500 million loans, apart from implementing the harsh conditionalities which can give a chance to the opposition to bring out people on the street", PPP sources said.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

It is learnt that apart from holding talks on budgetary matters, the government was also busy making hectic efforts to get released the last installment of the $600 million standby loan. "We have so far received $265 million from the IMF. The remaining amount out of promised $600 million will be released by the IMF, keeping in view recommendations of those officials of the fund who are these days in Pakistan to hold talks with Islamabad on certain matters", official sources revealed.

The IMF authorities are learnt to have convinced the government that tax on agriculture should be imposed in the new budget.

"The prime minister has desired that the agriculture sector should also be taxed this time", the source said, adding that the "government would have to muster the support of feudals before making this decision public. It is learnt that IMF officials are also demanding the levy of general sales tax (GST), but the government would not like to go to this extent. The fixed tax scheme will continue next year", the sources concluded.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has told the Pakistan Government that from now onwards it will release the standby tranches on a monthly and not quarterly basis.

"The IMF has told the government that it will release 60 to 70 million dollars only every month," the official sources confided to THE FRONTIER POST.

The IMF agreed for the standby loan of 596 million dollars in October last, out of which 316 million dollars was left to be given to Pakistan.

"Earlier, Pakistan used to get 200 million dollars quarterly, this decision of IMF was very surprising and they had taken this decision after seeing that Pakistan was not complying with the conditions set by the IMF," the sources added.

The sources said that during the recent meetings of the visiting IMF delegation with Pakistan Government, IMF have conveyed their reservations regarding the implementation of various conditions which were agreed between Pakistan and IMF at the time of standby loan agreement which prime minister's adviser on economic affairs has signed with the IMF in Washington in October last.

"This decision of IMF of releasing meagre amount of trance monthly shows that IMF will now closely monitor the economic activity of Pakistan and finding any violation of the agreement they can hold back the trance on the pretext that Pakistan is violating the agreement," the sources added. "The IMF, earlier had shown reservations over the bank borrowing by the government which they think that it was reduced to Rs32 billion as per IMF condition by March 30 from Rs67 billion overnight was done by manipulating the figures," maintained the sources.

The sources informed that if the ongoing talks proved successful then there are chances that Pakistan will be able to convince IMF for the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) for the next fiscal year. "After the budget for the fiscal 1996-97 is presented, Pakistan will start the process of talks for the ESAF," maintained the sources.

The sources said that, meanwhile, the talks between the government and the IMF are still on and they will continue till Thursday, (May 23). "It is hoped that after these talks conclude the policy framework (IMF conditionalities) for the budget for fiscal year 1996-97 will be signed," the sources added.

The sources said that the major thing which the IMF wants the government to include in the coming budget is to bring the sales tax at the retail level bringing down the tariff to 65 per cent from 66 per cent, impose new taxes of at least Rs43 billion to cover the budget deficit.

However, the sources did not inform what was discussed at Tuesday's meeting but said that government borrowing, budget deficit and general sales tax remained the points of discussion.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: LTTE Militants Suffer 'Heavy Casualties' in Naval Attack

BK2305115296 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Operational Headquarters says that naval craft detected two terrorist boats moving southwest of Palladi in the Mannar District on Monday [20 May]. The two Tiger boats (?slammed) and the occupants jumped over board when the naval craft closed in. The naval craft engaged them with armaments completely destroying the two Tiger boats. Heavy casualties were caused to the Tigers.

At Chavakachcheri in the Jaffna District, the troops recovered one T-56 weapon with two magazines on Tuesday. These were recovered following information received from the civilians. A group of terrorists hijacked a vehicle of the Ceylon Electricity Board at Pandaramullai, northwest of Batticaloa, on Tuesday. The vehicle was hijacked with the electrical superintendent of the area. Later, the terrorists released him without the vehicle.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

At Palikkuruppu, southeast of Trincomalee, a group of terrorists shot dead an unidentified civilian. The police are conducting investigation.

Sri Lanka: Commander—No Human Rights Complaints Against Army

BK2305103496 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 23 May 96

[LANKAPUVATH report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, Wednesday [22 May] — Army Commander Lieutenant General Rohan Daluwatte said on Tuesday that the writ of the Sri Lankan government is now running in the entire Jaffna peninsula.

He said that this time round, there had not been a single complaint of human rights violations by the soldiers, and that the security forces and the public in Jaffna were cooperating and helping each other in restoring the peninsula to normalcy. Residents of Jaffna have accepted that the soldiers are their friends, and not their foes.

Before operation 'Riviresa,' the soldiers had been given special instruction classes on the absolute necessity to observe human rights and not to commit any violence.

This, he said, was a new generation of soldiers, each of whom even carries a booklet on human rights. They had also been told that severe action will be taken against any human rights violators.

Sri Lanka: LTTE Dispatch Reports Troop Atrocities, LTTE Offensive

BK2205123696 (Internet) Tamil Eelam News WWW in Tamil 17 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Two Kfir jet planes resorted to indiscriminate bombardments on civilian settlements in Tambirai [name as transliterated] locality early in the morning today. Five Tamil civilians were killed and 11 seriously injured in this state terrorism. Three victims of the horrendous bombing raids died on the spot when their bodies were torn asunder and two died on the way to hospital.

Meanwhile, six civilians were killed and several others injured in the frenzied attack carried out by the Sri Lankan Air Force in Vadamarachchi yesterday. A number of houses were completely damaged in the horrible and frenzied attacks carried out by Kfir jets on the villages in Vadamarachchi East. Two planes briefly carried out bombing raids at 0830 yesterday morning. They returned at 1030 to the same locality and resumed their bombing on thickly populated areas. Four civilians were killed on the spot and several others injured. Similarly, these planes appeared at noon and retreated without making any attacks. They appeared at 1500 for the fourth time and resumed attacks, killing two civilians.

Second Lieutenant Senthil alias Ramalingam Somasundaram from Amparai attained martyrdom in a gunfight with Sri Lankan policemen in Akkaraippattu. Our tributes go to that national hero, who completely dedicated himself in the sacred task of routing the enemies from our motherland.

It was reported yesterday that Operation Riviresa-Two launched by the Sri Lankan troops is being continued. Consequent to this military operation, which was launched with the objective of capturing Vadamarachchi, the military is understood to have been occupying some areas in Vadamarachchi.

Ten Sri Lankan soldiers were killed and several others seriously injured in an ambush carried out by the crack unit of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] at Sarasalai in Thenmarachchi. There are no details about this attack.

According to available reports, 30 children of school age were rounded up by Sri Lankan troops. Their parents are very much worried as their whereabouts are unknown.

At present, the armed forces have set up their camp at a housing project site in Navatkuli. This housing project, containing 300 houses, is reported to have been converted into a major camp site of the armed forces. The troops, who are felling a large number of coconut and palmyra trees in the area, are using them to build their fortifications.

Similarly, a major camp site has also been set up in Kopay area. More than 500 young men and women are being detained and tortured there under the pretext of interrogations.

Dr. Sivagnu, deputy director of medical services for Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu Districts was arrested at Tandikkulam on the night of 14 May. He was arrested on his way to Trincomalee, where he was to attend a medical conference. The military attributes his arrest to his open comments about the shortage of medicines and lack of facilities in the hospital under his control.

The Tigers' aspiration: the motherland of Tamil Eelam! Thanks.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Sri Lanka: LTTE Dispatch Reports Civilian Deaths in Air Force Raids

BK2305105396 (Internet) Tamil Eelam News WWW in Tamil 18 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Eight civilians were killed and 16 seriously injured in bombing raids carried out by Sri Lankan Air Force planes at two different places in Wanni yesterday.

Details of the five civilians killed in frenzied bomb attacks by Sri Lankan Air Force planes at Tampirai [as transliterated] locality in Pooneryn have been disclosed. The civilians killed in this genocidal act by the Chandrika Kumaratunga government are Susaipillai Franscis, 37, the father of five children; Thangavelu Ravindran, 34, father of one; Kanthaiah Devarasa, 38; R. Balachandran, 30; and Apputhurai Chandrarasa, father of two. It should be noted that the bombing raid was conducted on a heavily crowded marketplace. A civilian who witnessed this gory incident said the Air Force's aim was to kill as many civilians as possible.

Three civilians died in a pathetic condition and eight others sustained serious injuries in yet another bombing raid at Nedunkerni at 1330. This frenzied act was carried out as people crowded near a public well to draw water. Powerful bombs are reported to have been used, creating deep craters in the ground. A number of people were rescued in deplorable condition — covered with soil — and were admitted to the hospital.

Sixteen students from Omantai Central College joined the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] the day before yesterday.

Observers point out that the Chandrika Kumaratunga government is preaching peace on the one hand and intensifying the worst kind of genocidal war on the other. They point to the fact that Chandrika Kumaratunga has been implementing this genocidal war using even meaner and nastier tactics than her predecessors. These observers also say that due the military action launched by Chandria Kumaratunga in the garb of "war for peace," several hundred Tamil people have been killed; thousands wounded and crippled; hundreds of thousands displaced on an unprecedented scale; houses, property, and valuables lost; and Tamils arrested unreasonably. [passage omitted]

The Tigers' aspiration is for a Tamil Eelam motherland! Thanks.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 352
MERRIFIELD, VA.

This is a U.S. Government publication produced by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). Its contents in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the U.S. Government.

FBIS collects, translates, disseminates, and analyzes foreign open-source information on behalf of the U.S. Government. Its publications may contain copyrighted material. ***Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.***

— Bracketed indicators before the first sentence of each item describe the way in which the material was processed by FBIS.

— Headlines and all bracketed explanatory notes are supplied by FBIS.

— Personal and place names are rendered in accordance with the decisions of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names as adapted by FBIS. Unverified names in radio and television material appear in parentheses and are spelled phonetically; words and phrases in parentheses preceded by a question mark are unclear in the original and deduced from context.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

U.S. Government Customers

For a list of FBIS products, to subscribe to an FBIS publication, or to indicate a change of address contact:

FBIS
P.O. Box 2604
Washington, DC 20013-2604
Telephone: (202) 338-6735
FAX: (703) 733-6042

Non-Government Customers

Subscriptions are available from the National Technical Information Service:

NTIS
5285 Port Royal Road
Springfield, VA 22161
Telephone: (703) 487-4630
FAX: (703) 321-8547

New subscribers should expect a 30-day delay in receipt of the first issue.